

1 JULIA HARUMI MASS (CA SBN 189649)

jmass@aclunc.org

2 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

39 Drumm Street

3 San Francisco, CA 94111

Telephone: 415-621-2493

4 Facsimile: 415-255-8437

5 PHILIP HWANG (CA SBN 185070)

phwang@lccr.com

6 LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

131 Steuart Street, Suite 400

7 San Francisco, CA 94105

Telephone: 415-543-9444

8 Facsimile: 415-543-0296

9 KATHLEEN D. PATTERSON (CA SBN 124768)

kpatterson@orrick.com

10 ORRICK, HERRINGTON & SUTCLIFFE LLP

The Orrick Building

11 405 Howard Street

San Francisco, CA 94105-2669

12 Telephone: 415-773-5700

Facsimile: 415-773-5759

13 Attorneys for Plaintiffs

14 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA and LAWYERS'

15 COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

16 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

17 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

18 SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

19  
20 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF  
21 NORTHERN CALIFORNIA and  
22 LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL  
RIGHTS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY  
AREA,

23 Plaintiffs,

24 v.

25 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND  
26 SECURITY,

27 Defendant.

Case No.

**EXHIBIT A – PART 2 OF 2 TO  
COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY  
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. §  
552


**APPENDIX B**

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publication Name</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	Immigration Raids Stun Community	<i>Santa Cruz Sentinel</i>	Jondi Gumz	Sep. 9, 2006
2.	Santa Cruz, San Benito Counties, 107 Arrested in Immigration Sweep	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	Vanessa Hua	Sep. 9, 2006
3.	Immigration Sweep Nets 107	<i>Santa Cruz Sentinel</i>	Roger Sideman	Sep. 10, 2006
4.	Church Leaders Speak Out Against Immigration Sweeps; Arrests, Deportations in Santa Cruz Area Part of National Drive	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	Tyche Hendricks	Sep. 14, 2006
5.	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement "Operation Return to Sender" Program Hits Danbury	<i>HatCity Blog</i> ; <a href="http://hatcityblog.bogspot.com/2006/09/us-immigration-and-customs-enforcement.html">http://hatcityblog.bogspot.com/2006/09/us-immigration-and-customs-enforcement.html</a>	CT Blogger	Sep. 19, 2006
6.	Feds' Raids Spread Fear Among Immigrants	<i>Socialist Worker Online</i>	Eric Ruder	Sep. 22, 2006
7.	Immigrants' Families Figuring Out What to do After Federal Raids	<i>New York Times</i>	Julia Preston and Martin Forstenzer	Dec. 16, 2006
8.	Immigrants go From Farm to Jails, And a Climate of Fear Settles in	<i>New York Times</i>	Nina Bernstein	Dec. 24, 2006
9.	Immigration Sweep Angers School Officials	<i>NBC11</i> (KNTV-TV, San Jose); <a href="http://www.nbc11.com/news/10798082/detail.html#">http://www.nbc11.com/news/10798082/detail.html#</a>		Jan. 19, 2007
10.	Senators Meet on Recent Immigration Raid	<i>Associated Press</i>	Jennifer Talhelm	Jan. 22, 2007
11.	Latino Group Upset by Raids	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Shirley Dang	Jan. 22, 2007
12.	Southern California Immigration Raid Nets 761 Arrests	<i>Associated Press</i>		Jan. 23, 2007
13.	Feds Arrest 119 Illegal Immigrants in Contra Costa	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	Tyche Hendricks	Jan. 23, 2007
14.	Marchers Will Protest Sweeps of Immigrants	<i>San Bernardino County Sun</i>	Sara A. Carter	Jan. 25, 2007

	Title	Publication Name	Author	Date
15.	Immigration Raid Draws Protest From Labor Officials	<i>New York Times</i>	Julia Preston	Jan. 26, 2007
16.	Federal Agents Pose as Police to Make Busts; Immigration Authorities Misidentify Themselves to Gain Entry for Arrests	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Tom Lochner	Jan. 26, 2007
17.	Immigration Push Has Latinos Wary	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Kimberly S. Wetzel	Jan. 27, 2007
18.	Raids Point to Call For Reform	<i>Denver Post</i>	Chuck Plunkett and Anne C. Mulkern	Jan. 28, 2007
19.	Immigration Sweeps a 'Reign of Terror'; Latinos Unfairly Targeted for Deportation by Federal Efforts, Advocate Group Says	<i>Oakland Tribune</i>	Kimberly S. Wetzel	Jan. 29, 2007
20.	Officials Meet With Public Over Immigration Raids; Police Captain and Mayor Try to Soothe Fears of Residents	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	Delfin Vigil	Jan. 29, 2007
21.	Fight Over Rights	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Tom Lochner	Jan. 29, 2007
22.	Arrests Cast Pall Over Immigrants	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Tom Lochner	Feb. 2, 2007
23.	Immigrants in Richmond Live in Fear of Deportation; Residents Complaining of Rights Violations Gain Local Officials' Support	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	David DeBolt	Feb. 3, 2007
24.	U.S. Immigration Sweeps Hitting Peninsula Area	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Michael Manekin and Kelly Pakula	Feb. 7, 2007
25.	Redwood City School Attendance Lower After Immigration Raids	KCBS (KCBS-AM 740, San Francisco), Feb. 7, 2007, <a href="http://kcbs.com/pages/223660.php?contentType=4&amp;contentID=316478">http://kcbs.com/pages/223660.php?contentType=4&amp;contentID=316478</a>		Feb. 7, 2007
26.	City Seeks Calm After Raids on Immigrants	<i>San Mateo Daily News</i>	Melissa McRobbie	Feb. 7, 2007
27.	Richmond Calls For End to Feds' Immigration Raids	CBS 5 (KPIX-TV, San Francisco) <a href="http://cbs5.com/local/local_story_039004207.html">http://cbs5.com/local/local_story_039004207.html</a>	Anna Werner	Feb. 7, 2007
28.	Immigration Raids Put City on Edge	<i>San Mateo Daily Journal</i>	Dana Yates	Feb. 7, 2007

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publication Name</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
29.	Officials Try to Ease Residents' Concerns	<i>West County Times</i>	John Geluardi	Feb. 8, 2007
30.	Richmond Pledges to Keep Immigrants Feeling Safe; City Council Calls for Humane Action	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	John Geluardi	Feb. 9, 2007
31.	Immigration Raid Leaves Texas Town a Skeleton	<i>Washington Post</i>	Sylvia Moreno	Feb. 9, 2007
32.	Redwood City Holds Meeting to Ease Immigrants' Fears	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Michael Manekin	Feb. 9, 2007
33.	Students Face Tough Choices After Immigration Raids	KCBS.com (KCBS-AM, San Francisco), <a href="http://kcbs.com/pages/232032.php?contentType=4&amp;contentId=323414">http://kcbs.com/pages/232032.php?contentType=4&amp;contentId=323414</a>		Feb. 10, 2007
34.	Effects of Raid Still Felt in Iowa Town	<i>USA Today</i>	Judy Keen	Feb. 12, 2007
35.	ICE Raids Dubbed Harmful	<i>San Mateo Daily Journal</i>	Michelle Durand	Feb. 14, 2007
36.	Immigration Agents Conducting Raids in S.F.	CBS 5 (KPIX-TV, San Francisco) <a href="http://cbs5.com/local/local_story_045214756.html">http://cbs5.com/local/local_story_045214756.html</a>	Anna Werner	
37.	Eshoo Responds to Immigrants' Arrests	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Kelly Pakula	Feb. 15, 2007
38.	Officials Balk at Criticizing Sweeps	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Michael Manekin and Kelly Pakula	Feb. 16, 2007
39.	Immigrant Advocates Blast Raids, Crackdown; City Officials Stand by Pledge to Give Sanctuary to Illegals	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	Tyche Hendricks	Feb. 22, 2007
40.	City Addresses ICE Raids: Actions Tied to Police Spark Latinos' Fears	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Karl Fischer	Feb. 22, 2007
41.	Coalition Wants County Declared Sanctuary for Illegal Immigrants	<i>Inside Bay Area</i>	Michael Manekin	Feb. 23, 2007
42.	Roundup of Illegals Shakes up Mendota; Federal Action Splits Families, Empties Streets	<i>Fresno Bee</i>	Vanessa Colón	Feb. 27, 2007
43.	Congress Marks Opening Day on Immigration Policy	<i>San Diego Union-Tribune</i>	Jerry Kammer	Feb. 27, 2007
44.	White House Pushes Immigration Overhaul	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	Nicole Gaouette	Feb. 28, 2007

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publication Name</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
45.	Kennedy, McCain Try Again on Immigration, Bill Would Keep Fence, But Ease Way to Citizenship	<i>The Boston Globe</i>	Rick Klein	Feb. 28, 2007
46.	ICE Raids a Bid to Chill Immigrant Organizing	<i>Freedom Socialist</i>		February-March 2007
47.	Congress to Restart Debate on Migrant Reform, Lawmakers Working Out Details on Measures	<i>azcentral.com</i> ; <a href="http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0301immig-bills0301.html#">http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0301immig-bills0301.html#</a>	Mike Madden	Mar. 1, 2007
48.	Emotions Still Run High Weeks After Immigration Raids	<i>Palo Alto Daily News</i>	Melissa McRobbie	Mar. 2, 2007
49.	Immigration Reform Fight Not Going Away	<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>	Sue Ontiveros	Mar. 3, 2007
50.	U.S. Needs Humane Immigration Policy Now	<i>Contra Costa Times</i>	Editorial	Mar. 4, 2007
51.	Immigrants Advised About Their Rights	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	Anna Gorman	Mar. 4, 2007
52.	The Problems of Immigration Policy – and a Call For a Fix	<i>Times-Republican</i>	Ryan Brinks	Mar. 5, 2007

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September 9, 2006

**SANTA CRUZ**

## **Immigration raids stun community**

**BY JONDI GUMZ**  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Two lawyers specializing in immigration said Friday that their offices have been flooded with people reporting that family members have been taken into federal custody for deportation.

The arrests took place Thursday in Watsonville, and Friday in Santa Cruz and Live Oak, said Doug Keegan, an attorney with the Santa Cruz County Immigration Project in Watsonville, and Santa Cruz attorney Alisa Thomas.

The number of people allegedly taken into custody could not be determined. Attempts to reach the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in San Francisco beginning just before 5 p.m. Friday, were unsuccessful, but Keegan reported seeing 10 families asking if missing family members could return. Thomas reported seeing about 12 families with the same question. Some have already been deported and have called their families from Tijuana, she said.

Most of those taken into custody were men, the two lawyers said, although some were women. Families told the lawyers they opened the doors of their homes after officials knocked between 4 and 6 a.m. Immigration officers took the family members away, the lawyers said.

"None of the people I saw today are criminals," said Thomas. "Their parents brought them over when they were children illegally and they never were able to fix their papers. Many of them own their own businesses. They own their own homes."

Keegan agreed.

"These are not people with outstanding deportation orders or convictions or child abusers," he said. "These are people who happened to be close at hand in the same household as the people on the list."

In one case, the man was convicted of a crime 10 or more years ago, but had served his time, Keegan added.

At least four of those taken into custody were members of Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Santa Cruz, according to Barbara Meister of the Community Organized for Relational Power in Action, an interfaith coalition in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties.

"The community is outraged that families would be torn apart," she said.

Bishop Sylvester Ryan of the Diocese of Monterey plans a press conference to speak out on the arrests Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. at Resurrection Church in Aptos, according to Sheilah Lynch, diocesan director of family life.

"They are our parishioners, part of our Catholic community," Lynch said.

It's the first press conference on the issue in the diocese since U.S. bishops issued a letter on immigrant justice in January.

Elizabeth Schilling, co-director of the Community Bridges Live Oak Family Resource Center, said three families came to her to report the father in the household was taken away.

"I'm very upset," she said. "These families are contributing members of our community, trying to improve themselves."

Patrick Conway, the pastoral assistant at Resurrection Church, took a similar view.

"We want to know what's going on," he said. "This doesn't look like the right way to do it. Almost everyone in the U.S. is descended from immigrants. There is a double standard here."

Keegan said there isn't much the lawyers can do. He called the office of Rep. Sam Farr, D-Carmel, whose staff offered to help set up a meeting to ask ICE officials to eliminate this kind of operation in Santa Cruz.

He and Thomas plan to brief people this evening after the Mass at Star of the Sea Church.

Contact Jondi Gumz at [atjgumz@santacruzsentinel.com](mailto:atjgumz@santacruzsentinel.com).

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## **SANTA CRUZ, SAN BENITO COUNTIES**

### **107 arrested in immigration sweep**

- Vanessa Hua

Saturday, September 9, 2006

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers arrested 107 people for immigration violations Thursday and Friday in Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Hollister, officials said.

The majority of the violators arrested in Operation Return to Sender were from Mexico, but officers also arrested people from India, El Salvador and Guatemala, said spokeswoman Lori Haley.

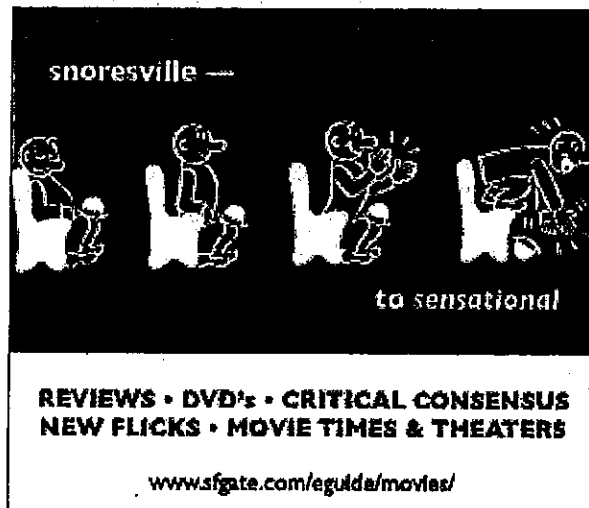
Forty-four violators have already been deported, and one was turned over to local authorities because of an outside arrest warrant for driving without a license and possession of a controlled substance. The rest remain in custody, Haley said.

The rapid deportation troubles local immigration attorneys because it deprives violators of their access to counsel and courts, said Stacy Tolchin, a San Francisco immigration attorney who is representing 20-year-old and 13-year-old U.S. citizens whose parents were taken away in the sweep.


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September 10, 2006

## Immigration sweep nets 107

**BY ROGER SIDEMAN**  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Federal officials confirmed they arrested 107 people for immigration violations in Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Hollister in an organized sweep Thursday and Friday.

Those arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were foreign nationals with final orders of deportation, criminals and other immigration violators, spokeswoman Lori Haley said. Most were Mexicans, though some were from El Salvador, Guatemala and India, she said.

"We know who we are going to look for," Haley said. "They have been ordered to leave by a judge and they are ignoring those orders."

Nineteen arrested in the operation, dubbed Return to Sender, have criminal convictions including robbery, assault with a deadly weapon and sex offenses against minors, she said. One was turned over to local authorities because of an arrest warrant for driving without a license, she said.

Haley said 44 of those arrested already have been sent back to their home countries. The rest are in custody and awaiting a hearing before an immigration judge, where they could make a case to stay in the country, she said.

Two lawyers specializing in immigration said Friday that their offices have been flooded with people reporting that family members had been taken from their homes into federal custody for deportation.

Most were men who had been brought to the United States by their parents while they were children, according to lawyers Doug Keegan, with the Santa Cruz County Immigration Project in Watsonville, and Alisa Thomas of Santa Cruz.


At least four were members of Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Santa Cruz, according to Barbara Meister of the Community Organized for Relational Power in Action, an interfaith coalition in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties.

Bishop Sylvester Ryan of the Diocese of Monterey plans a press conference about the arrests at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday at Resurrection Church in Aptos, according to Shellah Lynch, diocesan director of family life.

The San Francisco field office conducted the operation, Haley said, and there will be more in the future.

The sweep is part of a nationwide enforcement operation, she said. During the last fiscal year, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has made more than 20,000 arrests including 9,000 criminal aliens, she said.

Contact Roger Sideman at [rsideman@santacruzsentinel.com](mailto:rsideman@santacruzsentinel.com).

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**Church leaders speak out against  
immigration sweeps  
Arrests, deportations in Santa Cruz  
area part of national drive**

**- Tyche Hendricks, Chronicle Staff Writer  
Thursday, September 14, 2006**

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☒ No

Leaders of four different religious faiths spoke out Wednesday near Santa Cruz on behalf of families of scores of immigration violators deported last week as controversy continued over federal immigration sweeps that have netted thousands of people since May.

The 107 arrests in near Watsonville, Santa Cruz and Hollister last week were part of a new crackdown on illegal immigration by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

In Operation Return to Sender, federal authorities have arrested 24,000 people nationally, 2,000 of them in Northern California, and deported 6,800 people.

The arrests targeted individuals, said Timothy Aitken, deputy director of the agency's detention and removal office in San Francisco. He said the agency doesn't do random sweeps.

About one-third of those arrested nationally -- and one-fifth of those picked up in Northern California last week -- have criminal records. The rest either had ignored deportation orders issued by immigration judges or were "collateral arrests" -- people picked up on immigration charges while agents were seeking specific fugitives.

"We're trying to put integrity back in the immigration process," said Aitken. "You need to comply with the law, or you may find someone knocking at your door and you'll get deported."

Of the people arrested last week, 42 had ignored deportation orders, and the remaining 65 were illegal immigrants the agents happened to encounter. Most were Mexican citizens, but a few came from El Salvador, Guatemala and India. As of Wednesday, 93 had been deported, said Aitken, who leads Northern California's three fugitive operations teams, which are among 45 such teams across the country.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement expects to add seven more teams by the end of the year, according to Lori Haley, an agency spokeswoman. The agency estimates there are more than 590,000 "fugitive aliens" in the country, including 29,000 in Northern California.

The religious leaders who spoke out Wednesday acknowledged that the government has a right to enforce immigration law. But they said enforcement can tear apart families in which some members are illegal and others are U.S. citizens.

"It is clear that we have reached a point where we need legislation that will produce a viable path to citizenship for undocumented persons residing in our nation and one (law) that protects the integrity of families and the safety of children," Roman Catholic Bishop Sylvester Ryan said at a press conference at the Resurrection Catholic Community Church in Aptos.

Stacy Tolchin, a San Francisco immigration attorney representing two children whose parents were deported to Mexico, criticized the operation as much more aggressive than in the past.

"Don't deport them the same day," she said. "Give them access to counsel. You're ripping them away from their families. It's really malicious."

The increase in immigration enforcement inside the United States as well as at the border comes as Congress has stalled on revamping the nation's immigration system.

President Bush has failed to win support from conservatives in his own party for a guest worker program and a path to legal status for many of the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States.

Some observers said the current crackdown is an effort by the Bush administration to prove it is tough on enforcing immigration law.

Michael Cutler, a former immigration agent in New York now associated with the Center for Immigration Studies, a think tank in Washington that supports tighter restrictions on immigration, said a better name for the current effort would be "Operation Backrub."

"The administration has administered warm milk and a backrub to the American people to inspire a false sense of confidence," he said. "The president has an agenda, which appears to be open up the border between the U.S. and Mexico and the U.S. and Canada. ... He's been doing this to be able to sell his package."

Immigration enforcement has generally focused on policing the border, but that alone cannot reduce illegal immigration, said Deborah Meyers, a senior policy analyst at the Migration Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. Boosting enforcement inside the country -- removing criminals and people who have already had their day in court -- is a sensible next step, she said. But it too is limited.

"You can deport the people, but if employers are still hiring illegal workers, you're not going to solve the problem," she said. "They're tackling the symptom of the problem, which is that people are here. But are they tackling the employment magnet? Are they tackling the fact that there's no way for these workers to come legally? It's not clear."

**This story has been corrected since it appeared in print editions.**

*E-mail Tyche Hendricks at [thendricks@sfgchronicle.com](mailto:thendricks@sfgchronicle.com).*

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KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT DANBURY CT SINCE JULY 19 2005

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

## U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement "Operation Return to Sender" program hits Danbury

Today, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) did a sweep of Danbury in a program dubbed "**Operation Return to Sender**" and arrested 11 illegal immigrants at Kennedy Park.

The national ICE program targets immigrants with criminal records, final orders of deportation or other immigration violations.

Here is a more detailed explanation of the program.

Operation Return to Sender is the name for a massive sweep of illegal immigrants by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency which began on May 26, 2006.

The campaign has focused on those individuals deemed to be the most dangerous, including convicted felons and gang members, particularly those of the notorious Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang, as well as repeat offenders, some of whom had already been deported. As of mid-June 2006, over 2,000 illegal immigrants have been arrested, over 800 of which were deported.

Although ICE publically says they are targeting criminals, not everyone deported is a "dangerous" criminal. For example, on Friday Sept. 8, 2006 ICE picked up people in Santa Cruz, CA that were brought into the US by their parents years ago. In one case, ICE took a husband and wife at 5AM and left their 19

### PREVIOUS POSTS

Feds sweep Danbury for illegal immigrants

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and 13 year old daughters home alone.

For more info into the program, click [here](#) or [here](#).

Word of this program was announced in Tribuna newspaper months ago and I'll have more information on everything later.

**UPDATE:** This isn't the first time the ICE program visited Danbury.

Federal immigration officials confirmed Wednesday the five immigrants captured in Danbury earlier this month will be deported as part of a nationwide sweep of former deportees who slipped back into the country. The five men were rounded up in Danbury the morning of June 8. They were held briefly at the Danbury Police Department before agents of the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement took them out of the city.

"They were previously deported," said Capt. Robert Myles, public information officer with the police department. The five men apparently came back into the country illegally,

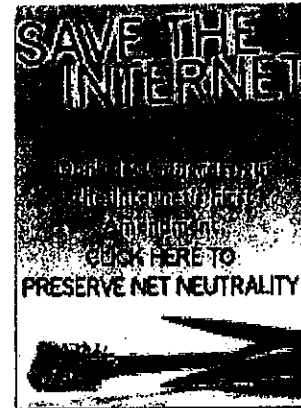
[...]

In a blitz that began May 26, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has arrested nearly 2,100 illegal immigrants across the country. More than 800 of them have already been deported.

Officials say the raids have focused on the most dangerous immigration scofflaws: gang members, pedophiles, violent felons and others who sneaked back into the country after a judge threw them out.

In New England, officials say the dragnet, which started June 7, caught more than 150 people, including 75 who had come back after being previously deported.

The five in Danbury were arrested the day after the federal "Return to Sender" operation started.



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Immigration and Customs Enforcement has a network of 35 fugitive teams across the country. The 2006 budget increased that number to 52, and the Bush administration is pushing for 70 by 2007.

The challenge, agents acknowledge, is staggering.

More than 500,000 "fugitive aliens" who have been deported by judges have either sneaked back into the country or never left.

Is this a good use of the taxpayer's money. How much did it cost the taxpayer to round up 11 illegal immigrants and what is the guarantee that they won't be back in the area within six months?

More info to come...

POSTED BY CTBLOGGER AT 2:17 PM

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# Socialist Worker**ONLINE**



"This reminds me of Nazi Germany"

## Feds' raids spread fear among immigrants

By Eric Ruder | September 22, 2006 | Page 12

FEDERAL AGENTS are carrying out raids and roundups in immigrant communities across the U.S., spreading fear and sending some migrant workers fleeing.

In three California towns--Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Hollister--Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents rounded up 107 people in two days in early September.

Immigration lawyers in the area have been swamped with people trying to help relatives caught up in the sweeps, but nearly half of those detained were deported within 24 hours, making it difficult for them to assert even the basic right to have their cases heard before an immigration judge.

Elsewhere, raids swept up 90 people in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area, 55 people in West Michigan and 34 in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley. Of those arrested, most came from Mexico, but people from many other countries--including Guatemala, El Salvador, India, Ethiopia and others--were also picked up.

In California, many parents are now afraid to walk their children to school for fear of being swept up. "There is a lot of apprehension in the Latino community about the safety of their children," said Ralph Porras, assistant superintendent of Santa Cruz City Schools.

One woman told *Socialist Worker* that her neighbor, a 19-year-old undocumented woman with a 2-year-old son, is afraid to leave her home, and asked, "Will my son become the property of the U.S. government if I am deported?"

According to press reports, the community of Stillmore, Ga., a small town of 1,000 people, has practically become a ghost town since ICE agents began roundups there on September 1.

"Trailer parks lie abandoned," wrote the Associated Press. "The poultry plant is scrambling to replace more than half its workforce. Business has dried up at stores where Mexican laborers once lined up to buy food, beer and cigarettes just weeks ago...More than 120 illegal immigrants have

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deported already.

Keegan thinks that the raids are a kind of retaliation for the immigrant rights protest that exploded this spring. "It's almost as if [the government] is trying to prove a point or make a statement to immigrants who demonstrated for better immigration laws and better reform that we're going to come back and flex our muscles--we're going to raid your communities and take people away," said Keegan.

Keegan's advice for immigrants facing harassment by ICE agents is to invoke their right to say nothing. "The most important thing I can tell people is not to open your door to begin with," said Keegan. "Once you open your door to the officers, they are given great latitude in questioning people. But if you don't open your door, they don't get that opportunity.

*Kenny Gramsky and Owen Goodwin contributed to this report.*

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December 16, 2006

## Immigrants' Families Figuring Out What to Do After Federal Raids

By JULIA PRESTON; MARTIN FORSTENZER CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM GREELEY, COLO.

Immigrant families scrambled yesterday to find detained relatives, arrange care for children of deported parents and recover from the loss of work as a result of raids this week by immigration authorities at meat-packing plants in six states.

The raids, part of a federal operation against identity theft, had stunning effects on the surrounding towns, residents said. In all, 1,282 legal and illegal immigrants were arrested, and in most cases the plants, all operated by Swift & Company of Greeley, Colo., were the largest employer around.

"Many people are still very frightened," Mayor Luis Aguilar of Cactus, Tex., said.

In Cactus, 275 employees were arrested.

In Worthington, Minn., with 230 arrests, residents said dozens of immigrants had gone into hiding.

"I've never seen anything like it, the sadness, the emptiness, the fear," a schoolteacher, Barbara Kremer, said. Ms. Kremer said she had provided shelter in her house since the raid for 24 immigrants who were afraid to return to their homes.

The raids, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents, netted dozens of immigrants who were legal residents but did not have their papers with them at work. Others arrested were illegal who have to leave the country or face deportation.

Many have children or spouses who are legal residents or Americans, and they have to decide whether the families will stay here or return to their home countries.

Veronica Rodriguez Perez, 20, an American who is works on a production line at the Swift beef-processing plant in Greeley, Colo., said she had not been able to talk with her husband, a Guatemalan, since he was arrested on Tuesday. Mrs. Perez said immigration agents separated during the raid from her husband, Roberto Pérez García.

"They made him and myself seem like criminals," she said. "He tried to give me a kiss on the forehead, but they would not let us talk to each other."

Mr. Pérez worked in the slaughterhouse side of the plant, she said. They have an 11-month-old son who was born in Colorado. Mr. Pérez, who was in the United States illegally, had not applied for residency because of the legal costs, she said.

Many of the arrested immigrants were taken to Camp Dodge in Johnston, Iowa, a National Guard base. Others were bussed to an immigration detention center in Atlanta for deportation proceedings.

The chief executive officer of Swift, Sam Rovit, said that production was slightly slowed at the plants, but that the losses in replacing the workers could be in the millions.

Swift executives said they had sought to work with immigration officials to pre-empt the raids. In March, the immigration agency subpoenaed the work documents of every Swift employee. After reviewing the papers, the agency retained them for many employees, including 665 at a plant in Marshalltown, Iowa, on suspicion that they were fake or stolen, Donald F. Wiseman, the Swift general counsel, said.

Swift began to interview its employees. About 400 left the company after the interviews, with many acknowledging that their documents were not legal, Mr. Wiseman said. He added that the immigration agency later ordered the company to stop the interviews.

On Nov. 28, Swift sought an injunction against the raids in Federal court in Amarillo, Tex. Judge Mary Lou Robinson denied the request.

Mr. Rovit said Swift, third largest meatpacker in the nation, paid good wages by industry standards, twice the minimum wage, with health benefits. With tight profit margins, he added, Swift would be hard-pressed to replace the workers for work, which is demanding and has historically attracted immigrants, including immigrants without proper documents.

"Nobody wants to have illegal immigrants," Mr. Rovit said.

He said a continued crackdown would bring "a shrinking in the industry, because there is not enough labor to go around."

Prosecutors in several states began filing criminal charges against accused suppliers of the illegal documents. In Salt Lake City, officials unsealed a complaint against Veronica Carrillo, a Mexican immigrant accused of selling real United States birth certificates to Swift employees.

December 24, 2006

## Immigrants Go From Farms to Jails, And a Climate of Fear Settles In

By NINA BERNSTEIN

A cold December rain gusted across fields of cabbage destined for New York City egg rolls, cole slaw and Christmas goose. Ankle-deep in mud, six immigrant farmworkers raced to harvest 120,000 pounds before nightfall, knowing that at dawn they could find immigration agents at their door.

The farmer who stopped to check their progress had lost 28 other workers in a raid in October, all illegal Mexican immigrants with false work permits at another farm here in western New York. Throughout the region, farm hands have simply disappeared by twos and threes, picked up on a Sunday as they went to church or to the laundry. Whole families have gone into hiding, like the couple who spent the night with their child in a plastic calf hutch.

As record-setting enforcement of immigration laws upends old, unspoken arrangements, a new climate of fear is sweeping through the rural communities of western and central New York.

"The farmers are just petrified at what's happening to their workers," said Maureen Torrey, an 11th-generation grower and a director of the Federal Reserve Bank's Buffalo branch whose family owns this field and more than 10,000 acres of vegetable and dairy farms.

And for the first time in years, farmers are also frightened for themselves. In small towns divided over immigration, they fear that speaking out -- or a disgruntled neighbor's call to the authorities -- could make them targets of the next raid and raise the threat of criminal prosecution.

Here where agriculture is the mainstay of a depressed economy, the mainstay of agriculture is largely illegal immigrant labor from Mexico. Now, more aggressive enforcement has disrupted a system of official winks, nods and paperwork that for years protected farmers from "knowingly" hiring the illegal immigrants who make up most of their work force.

"It serves as a polarizing force in communities," said Mary Jo Dudley, who directs the Cornell Farmworker Program, which does research. "The immigrant workers themselves see anyone as a potential enemy. The growers are nervous about everyone. There's this environment of fear and mistrust all across the board."

In a recent case that chilled many farmers, federal agents trying to develop a criminal case detained several longtime Hispanic employees of a small dairy farm in Clifton Springs, and unsuccessfully pressed them to give evidence that the owners knew they were here illegally.

Since raids began to increase in early spring, arrests have netted dozens of Mexican farm workers on

their way to milk parlors, apple orchards and vineyards, and prompted scores more to flee, affecting hundreds of farms. Some longtime employees with American children were deported too quickly for goodbyes, or remain out of reach in the federal detention center in Batavia, N.Y., where immigrants are tracked by alien registration number, not by name.

Federal officials say events here simply reflect a national commitment to more intensive enforcement of immigration laws, showcased in raids in December at Swift & Company meatpacking plants in six states.

The effort led to a record 189,924 deportations nationally during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, up 12 percent from the year before, officials said, and 2,186 deportations from Buffalo, up 24 percent. It includes prosecuting employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants, better cooperation with state and local law enforcement, and new money from Congress for more agents, more detention beds and quicker deportations.

In small towns like Sodus, Dresden and Elba, where a welcome sign declares that the population of 2,369 is "Just Right," some residents quietly approve of the crackdown. They are unhappy with the growing year-round presence of Mexicans they consider a drain on public services, resentful of the political clout of farmers, or concerned about the porous borders denounced nightly on CNN by Lou Dobbs. Others are torn, praising Mexican families but worried that some farmers exploit them.

Farm lenders and lobbyists warn of economic losses that will be measurable in unharvested crops, hundreds of closed farms and revenues lost in the wine tourism of the Finger Lakes. On the other side, supporters of stringent enforcement expect savings in schools and hospitals, and a boost to low wages as the labor market tightens.

The harvest of fear may be harder to chart, but it is already here. It can be felt in Sodus, where an October raid left a dozen children without either parent for days, and in vineyards near Penn Yan, where a grower of fine cabernet grapes reluctantly permits a worker to sleep in a car, hidden in the vines that he prunes. Everywhere, rumors fly about why one place was raided and not another, feeding suspicion and a fear of speaking out.

For Rodney and Debbie Brown, the dairy farmers in Clifton Springs who lost 6 of their 10 employees to immigration arrests, the experience began like an episode of "The Twilight Zone."

When no workers showed up at 6:30 a.m. on Aug. 28 to help milk 580 waiting cows, Mr. Brown went to the farmhouse where most of their Hispanic employees lived, only to find it eerily empty. Some of the workers had been with the Browns for more than seven years.

"All of a sudden they were all gone," Mrs. Brown said. "It was very scary."

Later, the Browns learned that agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement had been waiting for the workers in their driveway at dawn with state troopers, and had whisked them to the 450-bed detention center in Batavia, where there were 3,094 admissions this year. Like an estimated 650,000 immigrants in New York State and some 11 million nationally, the employees were in the United States illegally; the permits and Social Security cards they had shown to the Browns were fake.

What prompts such raids is rarely disclosed. But federal officials have said that they pursue tips from the public, adding to uneasy speculation about private vendettas or political retaliation. Such talk abounded in Sodus, for example, after an October raid at Marshall Farms, a large breeder of ferrets and dogs for



pharmaceutical companies. The consensus, several residents said, was that a disgruntled American employee had called in the complaint.

More than 18 workers, many of them longtime employees with children in Sodus schools or day care, were summoned by name to the office from their jobs cleaning animal cages, and taken away -- the men to Batavia, the women to unspecified county jails.

"A lot of the employees down there were very heartbroken to see the women walk out with shackles around their feet and handcuffs chained around their waists, crying," said Cliff DeMay, a large private labor contractor who supplies agricultural businesses in seven states with workers, and accepts their papers at face value -- part of a system that has allowed deniability to everyone but the illegal worker.

"The I.C.E., they've always picked up people on complaints," he added. "It's not the Border Patrol or I.C.E.'s fault. It's the fault of our damn politicians."

But Mr. DeMay also echoed a widespread view that those who criticized the raids were asking for trouble.

Others, including the Farm Bureau, pointed to the unusual intensification of the dairy investigation after Mr. Brown was quoted in a Sept. 11 Associated Press account. Michael W. Gilhooly, a spokesman for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, responded that raids were "carefully planned" and "result from investigative leads and intelligence."

Mrs. Brown, 46, said she was summoned to the federal building in Rochester and questioned for an hour and a half by immigration agents who threatened to subpoena her phone records. Federal prosecutors then brought felony charges against the workers for using fake Social Security numbers to get their milking jobs.

But rather than turn against their former employers in exchange for leniency, as prosecutors wanted, the Mexican men pleaded guilty to felonies and accepted deportation, said Michael Bersani and Anne Doeblor, lawyers who represented them in immigration court. Government lawyers would not discuss the case.

Neighboring farmers, who helped the Browns milk, seemed shaken. "A lot of them say, 'We should write letters to the editor, but we don't want to draw attention to ourselves,'" Mrs. Brown said. "Everyone is very panicky."

Some have a different perspective. Ray Woodhams, 58, a Sodus resident who works at a Rochester hospital that was sued by Hispanic employees who were barred from speaking Spanish, said he was glad to read of the arrests.

"The farmers have got their view, but they're shortsighted -- they're not looking at the country as a whole," said Mr. Woodhams, who notes that he is a registered Democrat and the son of a Dutch immigrant farmer. "The farmers say they can't get labor. Well, if they paid a decent wage, maybe they could." The Browns, echoing many farmers, counter that they have found no one steady to fill the vacant jobs.

Many labor advocates, after years of fighting farmers for wage and hour protections, find themselves in an uneasy alliance with their old foes.

"Suddenly everybody's interest is the same: Save the lives of the migrants," said John Ghertner, who is on the board of Rural and Migrant Ministry, an interfaith advocacy group. "From the farmers' perspective, so they have labor. From our point of view, human rights."

The smaller the farm and the more settled the work force, the more wrenching the arrests. Or so it seemed as friends gathered around the wife of a vineyard worker arrested in Yates County four days earlier, on his way to prune vines he had tended for a decade. His three children, 14, 11 and 2, are all American-born.

His wife, weeping, described how the agents who had taken him and two others into custody on the road circled back to the house to try to take her, too. As the agents banged at the door and tried to open it, she hid in the bedroom with the 2-year-old, she said, and put her hand over his mouth when he started to cry.

Victor Feria Reyes, the state-licensed labor contractor who had dispatched the father and the others to the vineyard, said that throughout the Finger Lakes, his crews were down by half. "A lot of people hate us," he said as his daughter Elenita, 8, leaned close. "They just say, 'Take them away.'"

The owner of the vineyard, who had lost three of his five workers to immigration arrests, called them "part of my family," but begged not to be named. "I'm afraid of retaliation," he said.



# NBC11.com

## Immigration Sweep Angers School Officials

POSTED: 10:25 pm PST January 19, 2007  
 UPDATED: 10:37 pm PST January 19, 2007

**CONCORD, Calif.** -- Administrators and teachers at an East Bay school are angry over a series of arrests made by immigration and customs agents.

Teachers and staff at Meadow Homes Elementary School in Concord said the arrests, which began Wednesday, are traumatizing students.

The timing of the roundup was what angered school leaders so much, NBC11's Victoria Nguyen reported.

The roundup was conducted in the morning hours as parents dropped their children off at school.

Students were worried that their parents would be taken away and not return to pick them up, NBC11 reported.

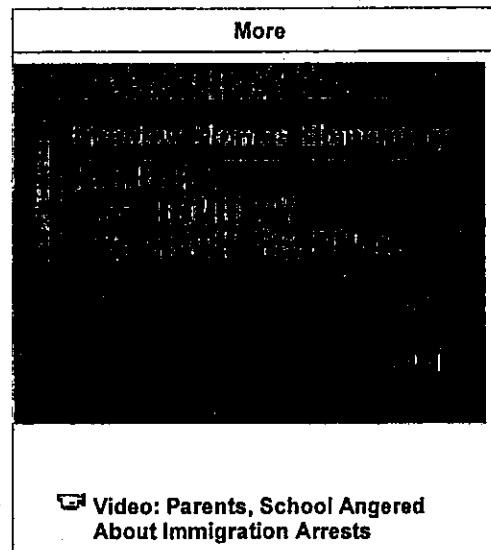
School principal Toby Montez said many students have been absent from school, kept home by worried parents.

Officials said the arrests are part of an ongoing operation targeting fugitives that have violated deportation orders.

No random arrests were made, officials said.

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Posted on Mon, Jan. 22, 2007

## Senators meet on recent immigration raid

JENNIFER TALHELM  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON** - The Bush administration is taking heat from lawmakers for the harm done to a company during last month's largest-ever immigration raid.

Immigration officials on Dec. 12 arrested 1,297 illegal workers at Swift & Co. meatpacking plants in Texas, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska and Utah.

After a closed-door meeting Monday with Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, senators from the affected states said the raid exposed flaws in the federal government and in a program designed to help employers screen for illegal immigrants.

Among the concerns, senators reported, were that agencies can't share information about stolen identities and that programs designed to catch illegal immigrants allow many lawbreakers to slip through the cracks.

"I can't think of a system that would be better designed to fail," Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said.

Chertoff acknowledged some of the problems, and said his department's programs are not "the perfect cure." Senators said they wanted Chertoff to enforce the laws, but they needed to assure companies that working with the government would not ultimately hurt them.

Swift participated in a program called Basic Pilot, which screens employees for illegal Social Security numbers. The system doesn't snag stolen Social Security numbers or numbers that are being used in multiple locations.

Although the government took no action against Swift in the Dec. 12 raids, the Greeley, Colo., meat processor was forced to temporarily halt operations. The raids could cost the company an estimated \$30 million.

"We want employers to use Basic Pilot," said Sen. Norm Coleman, R-Minn. "But we need to have a clear understanding with the business community. I think it's very unclear now."

The senators said they planned to introduce legislation to fix some of the problems.

For example, they hope to change the law to allow the Social Security Administration to tell the Homeland Security Department when a Social Security number is being used more than once.

Since the arrests, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has announced the indictments of 148 illegal immigrants, who used other peoples' Social Security numbers and other personal information to get jobs at Swift. Local prosecutors are bringing state charges against the immigrants, including 80 in Cache County, Utah, and 18 in Weld County, Colo.

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## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Posted on Mon, Jan. 22, 2007

### Latino group upset by raids

By Shirley Dang  
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

A wave of immigration raids in Concord, Pacheco and west Contra Costa County has prompted a local Latino advocacy group to file a complaint.

Officers from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, falsely identified themselves as police, refused to show identification proving their agency affiliation and prevented detainees from taking prescription medication with them, according to a draft of a complaint by the League of United Latin American Citizens.

The league also claims that agents wrongfully searched apartments of Latinos without permission under the pretext of picking up those with outstanding warrants, said Jerry Okendo, president of the league's Bay Area chapter. He estimates agents picked up more than 30 immigrants.

"They're supposed to be out working warrants," Okendo said. "They're not supposed to be making raids." He said he plans to send the complaint to the Department of Homeland Security today.

Representatives of ICE could not be reached for comment Saturday. However, ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley told the Times this week that ICE agents target known illegal immigrants who have disobeyed orders to leave the country and also possess the right to pick up others without legal papers to be in the United States.

The department created ICE in 2003 by combining the enforcement arms of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Customs Service. From 2004 through June 2006, the agency has removed more than 400,000 illegal aliens, according to an agency fact sheet.

The largest bust came last month at a Colorado meat-packing plant, where agents picked up nearly 3,000 illegal immigrants.

Latinos in Concord said sweeps off Detroit Avenue in the past few weeks have put a chill on daily life.

Students at Meadow Homes Elementary School stayed home from class Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in record numbers, said Principal Toby Montez. About 106 children were absent Wednesday, twice the normal number, with 88 out the following day, he said.

Parents called in worried that their children would be snatched up on the way to school, he said.

"There was a lot of fear, a lot of anxiety," Montez said. "A lot of kids there were traumatized."

Luis, a 10-year-old from Concord who attends the school, said agents picked up seven people from his apartment building near the corner of Detroit Avenue and Laguna Street on Wednesday morning.

His mother, who asked that the family not be identified, said agents came between 6 and 7:30 a.m.

"They took one of our friends who lived with us," Luis said.

Shirley Dang covers education. Reach her at 925-977-8418 or sdang@cctimes.com.

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**SFGate**.com**AP Exclusive: SoCal immigration raid one of largest in U.S.**

By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press Writer

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

(01-23) 13:31 PST Santa Ana, Calif. (AP) --

A sleepy-eyed man with a hooded sweat shirt and a plastic lunch pail scurries back inside at the sight of a dozen immigration agents clustered outside his apartment complex. He need not worry: they're after his neighbor.

Three officers creep toward the building and one raps loudly on the door of Apt. A. After a tense minute in the pre-dawn darkness, the door cracks open and they have their first arrest — a 29-year-old immigration fugitive with a DUI conviction.

It was a scene repeated across Southern California over the past week in a sting that officials say was among the largest in U.S. history targeting illegal immigrants who have criminal records or have ignored deportation orders.

By Tuesday, when federal immigration officials announced the results of the sweep, 338 illegal immigrants had been arrested at their homes in Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Los Angeles counties. Another 423 were taken into federal custody at county jails, said Virginia Kice, spokeswoman for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The Associated Press rode along on the first day of the secret sweeps, which began Jan. 17. Those arrested were from 14 countries, including Mexico, Honduras, Ukraine, India, Japan, Poland, and Trinidad. Of the 761 people arrested, more than 450 have already been deported, Kice said Tuesday.

The raids were a major push within "Operation Return to Sender," a crackdown that has resulted in 13,000 arrests nationwide since June. Immigration officials have also identified 3,000 inmates in state and local jails who will be deported.

The operation targets those illegal immigrants who hide after skipping their voluntary deportation proceedings and criminals who have re-entered the United States after being previously deported for crimes in the U.S.

It's an uphill battle. Despite ongoing efforts, officials estimate that about 600,000 illegal immigrants who have ignored deportation orders are still at large, Kice said.

"Foreign nationals who flout our laws and commit crimes against our citizens should be on notice that there are consequences," said Julie L. Myers, assistant secretary of Homeland Security for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "ICE will use all of the tools at its disposal to find you and

send you home."

For agents in Orange County, that meant gathering at 4 a.m. in a chilly parking lot for a pep talk before fanning out to "target" houses in Santa Ana and Anaheim on the first day of the sweep.

The agents hit paydirt early at Apt. A and sped off to their next stop — the suspected address of a convicted rapist.

Three officers pounded on the door of a two-story, stucco house in a working-class neighborhood. Another shone his flashlight at a woman wrapped in a blue bathrobe poking her head through an open downstairs window.

"Open the door, please. We're with the immigration police and we have to talk," he said in Spanish.

Soon the woman sat at the kitchen table as officers with flashlights roamed the house and herded seven men into the living room. Because none had an identification, the officers couldn't tell which one was their target.

Jim Hayes, director of ICE's Los Angeles field office, decided to book all the men.

"We're going to make sure they're not wanted for any more serious crimes," he said.

Six of the men were frisked, then escorted in handcuffed pairs to a van. The seventh man was a legal immigrant who owns the house; he told officers he didn't know any of the men — he just rented to them.

By now, it's 6 a.m., and the chances of surprising suspects are waning with the light. Hayes decides to take the van, loaded with the men from the two stops, back to the ICE processing center in downtown Santa Ana.

There, dozens of immigration officers buzz around a sterile, brightly lit room. They shout names and criminal stats to each other as they sift through piles of paperwork and enter digital fingerprint scans into a computer system.

The two dozen men — and one woman — brought in from other raids now sit on wooden benches, clutching paper bags filled with their personal belongings. ICE officers wind through the room interviewing them in Spanish and helping them fill out forms.

One by one, the immigrants are taken for mug shots and fingerprints. Some will be charged with illegal re-entry to the United States after felony deportation — a federal crime that can carry up to 20 years in prison. Others, first-time illegal immigrants with no other criminal record, will be processed and deported within days.

Adan Garcia, a 29-year-old dishwasher with a wife and two young boys in Honduras, considers himself lucky to be deported and not charged with a crime. He says he won't be back to the United States — at least not illegally.

"I came to this country to work, not harm anyone, and not expecting what happened this morning at 5 a.m.," said Garcia, who was taken into custody at the second house. "It wasn't supposed to be this way."

By Monday, ICE learned that all six men arrested at the second house were illegal immigrants, four with prior criminal records.

The rapist they were after had had moved out a week before and is still at large.

"Just because we didn't get him that day doesn't mean we won't get him," said Kice, the ICE spokeswoman. "This does not mean the search is over."

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2007/01/23/state/n122639S14.DTL>

**SFGate**.com

## **Feds arrest 119 illegal immigrants in Contra Costa**

Tyche Hendricks, Chronicle Staff Writer

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Federal officials have arrested 119 people in Contra Costa County in a weeklong illegal immigration crackdown, and they had deported 16 as of Monday.

This portion of the yearlong "Operation Return to Sender" took place primarily in Concord and Richmond and targeted fugitives who had ignored final deportation orders, said Timothy Aitken, deputy director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's detention and removal office in San Francisco.

ICE is the agency that now performs the enforcement functions of the old Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Agents also picked up 94 other undocumented immigrants they encountered in the process, he said.

Latino community advocates said the enforcement action has sown fear in East Bay immigrant communities.

Just over half of those arrested were Mexican citizens, he said. The rest were from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, India, the Philippines, Afghanistan, Fiji and Brazil.

Of the 119 people arrested, 18 were criminals, said Aitken, including people who had been convicted of possession of a controlled substance, possession of dangerous weapons, annoying and molesting children, disorderly conduct and driving under the influence with prior convictions.

"We want to go after the worst of the worst; we go after people who have ignored a judge's order," Aitken said. "But we can't be blind to someone who doesn't have lawful status in the United States. We wouldn't be doing our job if we ignored those people."

The agency has 52 teams nationwide like the three he manages in Northern and Central California, Aitken said. He said that number is to be expanded to 75 by the end of the year, though he would not say how many or what kind of officers are included in each team.

"Congress thinks this is important," he said. "They're putting some teeth back in immigration law."

Many illegal immigrants stayed home from work this week and kept their children home from school out of fear, Latino community leaders said.

George Vallejo, director of a day labor center in Concord, said at least four workers involved with



the center were picked up. In one case, Vallejo said, agents went to a home looking for the brother of a house-painter but ended up taking the painter too, leaving his wife and baby behind alone.

"I can see in their faces how scared people are," said Vallejo. "They're so afraid they're going to separate their families."

The Concord chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens filed a compliant Monday with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

LULAC chapter President Jerry Okendo said agents were not properly identifying themselves and, armed with a warrant for an individual, they were sweeping through apartment complexes and picking up anyone who could not provide proof they were living in the United States legally.

"We understand that ICE has a job to do," said Okendo, "But we also understand that there are laws and guidelines they have to follow, and they are not. As a civil rights organization, we're infuriated."

LULAC is helping affected families obtain legal counsel, Okendo said.

Spokeswoman Lori Haley with the immigration enforcement agency said she wasn't aware of the specific complaint, but said the agency would address them directly.

"They are entitled to notify headquarters with any concerns they have, and any allegations would be seriously reviewed," Haley said.

Richmond City Councilman John Marquez said he was dismayed that ICE agents were identifying themselves as police.

"We've worked a long time to develop a relationship between our Police Department and our Latino community so we can get control of the violence taking place in our city," he said. "Now when someone identifies themselves as police, people are afraid to cooperate."

The Richmond Police Department has a policy not to take part in investigations that deal only with immigration status, said department spokesman Lt. Mark Gagan.

The East Bay's Immigrant Legal Resource Center and other advocates have set a community forum about the roundup for 3 p.m. Sunday at St. Mark's Church, 159 Harbour Way, Richmond. Members of the Richmond Police Department and Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez, and Richmond city officials are invited.

Operation Return to Sender has arrested 13,000 people nationwide since June 2006, according to figures revised over the winter, Haley said.

Of those arrested, almost 1,600 were in Northern and Central California, and 29 percent were people with criminal records, she said. Aitken said the three fugitive operations teams he manages make similar arrests every day and not just as part of specific campaigns. His teams are trying to track down almost 15,000 people between Bakersfield and the Oregon border who have absconded from deportation orders, he said.

*E-mail Tyche Hendricks at [thendricks@sfgate.com](mailto:thendricks@sfgate.com).*

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/01/23/BAGU1NN6CQ1.DTL>

This article appeared on page **B - 8** of the San Francisco Chronicle

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## Marchers will protest sweeps of immigrants

Sara A. Carter, Staff Writer  
San Bernardino County Sun

Article Launched:

As the president asked lawmakers to compromise on immigration reform during his State of the Union address, a number of local activists started planning a large protest over what they see as dangerous raids on innocent immigrants.

Last week, 761 illegal immigrants from 14 countries - including Mexico, Honduras, Ukraine, India, Japan, Poland and Trinidad - were taken into custody by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

The action, "Operation Return to Sender," was part of a long series of sweeps that began nationwide in June.

Timothy Campos, a student at Pitzer College who is organizing the Friday protest, said the raids have a damaging effect on the people in the community. The march is set to start at 10 a.m. in the parking lot of the Pomona Day Labor Center, 1682 W. Mission Blvd.

"We're trying to let everybody know how we feel about these government raids," Campos said. "I feel like these raids are preying on the innocent people. It does have an effect on the community, and many of the students here work closely with the day-labor center in Pomona."

The raids conducted by ICE over the past year - coupled with the deep divide in Congress regarding immigration reform - has left both opponents and supporters of a guest-worker program wondering what the future will hold.

All seem to agree that - with a Democratic House and Senate - the president's immigration-reform package is likely to pass, but how to balance Bush's plan with national security matters will be more difficult, said Armando Navarro, professor of ethnic and Chicano studies at UC Riverside. Navarro is also a member of the National Alliance of Human Rights, a group supporting open borders with Mexico.

"These ICE raids could be a dangerous omen for all of us," Navarro said. "This could be a prelude of what's to come."

"The anti-immigrant climate keeps growing and will grow anticipating the president's immigration reform. Anti-immigrant groups feel more threatened now that there is a Democratic Congress backing the president's plans for immigration reform."

In Tuesday night's address, Bush said a reform package with a strong guest-worker program would alleviate the growing number of illegal immigrants entering the nation.

"We need to uphold the great tradition of the melting pot that welcomes and assimilates new arrivals," Bush said. "And we need to resolve the status of the illegal immigrants who are already in our country - without animosity and without amnesty."

Those who oppose the president's proposal say the creation of a guest-worker program would do nothing to squelch the nearly 1 million immigrants who enter the country illegally each year.

But for many, like Campos, who want to see a guest-worker program come to fruition, raids like the ones recently conducted in Southern California leave a bitter taste.

"These people are working, trying to make a better life," Campos said. "Yes, they are here illegally, but they are good people."

The ICE raids were part of Congress' call to crack down on the growing crisis of illegal immigration - with the number of illegal immigrants residing in the United States estimated to be between 12 million and 20 million.

Since its inception, "Operation Return to Sender" has resulted in 13,000 arrests.

Immigration officials also have identified 3,000 inmates in state and local jails who will be deported.

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## Federal agents pose as police to make busts

### Immigration authorities misidentify themselves to gain entry for arrests

By Tom Lochner, MEDIANEWS STAFF  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:

RICHMOND — A 17-year-old De Anza High School senior seized earlier this month by federal immigration agents who were looking for someone else has been released, but the furor over her abrupt arrest and other similar busts has become more intense.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agents dropped the De Anza student, Elvira Mendoza of San Pablo, off at a church social services agency in Concord last Friday, said Santiago Mendoza, 42, of Richmond. Another brother, Victor Mendoza, 21, arrested at the same time, remained in federal detention in Arizona pending a hearing Monday, his older brother said.

ICE agents who identified themselves as "police" arrested the two siblings at the San Pablo house of another brother, Carlos Mendoza, 32, when they could not find the person they said they were looking for: an in-law of Carlos' who left the country two years ago pursuant to a deportation order, Santiago Mendoza said.

While in custody, "Elvira said that they gave her a form to sign that they provide to all detainees, with boxes already ex-ed out saying they don't want to see a lawyer and all that," which she refused to sign, Santiago said. "My brother signed something, but he's not 100 percent sure of what he signed."

The Mendoza siblings' story is among hundreds of similar ones heard around the East Bay in recent weeks that have some community groups and local officials crying foul because federal agents' use of the word "police" to gain entry, among other aspects of a ratcheted-up, nationwide ICE enforcement action dubbed National Fugitive Operations Program.

Critics say it undermines immigrants' sometimes fragile trust in local police.

"At St. Mark's (Catholic Church in Richmond), we are working with (Police) Chief (Chris) Magnus on community policing — police officers on the street getting to know the community," said Cristina Espinosa, a community organizer with Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization, a group of socially active churches.

ICE's raid procedures threaten to undo some recent "success stories" of police-immigrant cooperation, Espinosa said.

San Pablo City Council Member Genoveva Garcia Calloway and Richmond Council Member John Marquez say immigrants feel deceived when the "police" turn out to be ICE agents, leaving the immigrants confused and making them less willing to come forward and cooperate with police investigating local crimes or devising crime-prevention strategies.

ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley defended ICE agents' use of the word "police" to gain access to homes and noted, "Oftentimes, when the door is answered, they elaborate on who they are."

"They are indeed federal police," she said. "People who don't understand much English generally understand the word 'police.'"

Richmond Police Lt. Mark Gagan agreed the agents are in fact police. But, he added, "we at the Richmond PD have heard that the ICE operations that targeted illegal residents have caused a lot of mistrust of all law enforcement. We understand this is a complex issue. We are sensitive to it, and we are opening a dialogue."

The primary mission of "Fugitive Ops," as ICE agents sometimes refer to it, is "to identify, locate, apprehend, process and remove fugitive aliens from the United States, with the highest priority placed on those fugitives who have been convicted of crimes," an ICE fact sheet says.

Some detainees are swiftly deported. But critics say agents use fugitive lists as an excuse to gain access to homes and sweep up people not on the list.

Haley said agents have the discretion to check out people other than their specific target.

An ICE operation in Concord last week triggered such crippling fear in Meadow Homes Elementary School students that they stayed home from class for at least two days last week.

Principal R. Toby Montez estimates 106 children were absent Jan. 17, twice the normal number, with 88 out Jan. 18.

"There was a lot of fear, a lot of anxiety," he said. "A lot of kids there were traumatized."

The event sent such a strong shock wave through the Latino community that Jerry Okendo of the League of United Latin American Citizens contacted U.S. Rep. George Miller's office about his concerns.

"We understand that ICE has a job to do, but could they do it a little more discreetly? They shouldn't be doing it the way they're doing it," Okendo said.

January 26, 2007

## Immigration Raid Draws Protest From Labor Officials

By JULIA PRESTON

An immigration raid at a huge North Carolina pork-packing plant provoked protests yesterday from union officials, who said the company, Smithfield Foods, had collaborated with the authorities searching for illegal immigrants to discourage its workers from organizing.

The dispute arose after Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested 21 workers on Wednesday morning at the plant, in Tar Heel, about 80 miles south of Raleigh. The workers, 18 Mexicans and 3 Guatemalans, were in this country illegally and will be deported, immigration officials said.

Smithfield executives said the immigration agents informed them on Tuesday that they would be coming to question the immigrants. They said they had been working with the immigration agency since July to verify that the 5,200 employees at the plant had legal employment and immigration documents.

Dennis Pittman, a Smithfield spokesman, said the arrests caused no disruption at the plant, one of the largest pork factories in the world, which processes as many as 32,000 hogs in a day. "There were no helicopters or buses or even anybody in uniforms," Mr. Pittman said. "It was done in an orderly, professional fashion."

He said the raid was not related to a bitter standoff that began more than a decade ago between the plant and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which is seeking to represent the workers.

Gene Bruskin, an organizer for the union, said the company had started to cooperate closely with immigration authorities after a walkout by immigrant workers last summer. "My concern is the company is using the immigration issue to manipulate this long fight over workers' rights," Mr. Bruskin said.

Tension over the workers' immigration status has been running high at the plant since November, when more than 500 employees stayed away for two days after the company fired about 50 workers it said had used false Social Security numbers when they were hired. The walkout was unusual for a nonunion plant.

The company agreed to reinstate the workers and gave them 60 days to correct errors in their employment forms or present new documents to verify their identities and legal immigration status. About 48 percent of the plant's employees describe themselves as Hispanic, Mr. Pittman said, and 37 percent are African-American.

After conducting a review last summer, Mr. Pittman said, the company found discrepancies between the

documents presented by 540 employees and the records of the Social Security Administration. The company told those workers that they would have to produce valid documents or face firing, he said.

Smithfield has been cooperating with a program in which the company vets its labor force and shares the results with the immigration agency, in exchange for some protection from disruptive, surprise immigration raids.

Immigration officials said they questioned the 21 employees on suspicion of links to criminal activity. Ultimately they were charged only with civil immigration violations. Matthew Allen, a senior immigration investigations official, said no criminal charges were planned.

Earlier this month, the union helped organize a petition drive by workers asking to take Martin Luther King's Birthday off as a paid holiday. More than 300 employees did not go to work that day, Jan. 15.

Mr. Pittman said it was not clear that the increased absences were a direct result of the union campaign.

Mr. Bruskin, the union organizer, said Smithfield had a history of threatening immigrants with deportation if they tried to unionize. The union has organized a national campaign to discourage consumers from buying Smithfield products.

The Tar Heel plant held elections in 1994 and 1997 to determine if the workers wanted to join the union. The union lost, but last May a federal appeals court threw out the 1997 election, finding that the company had engaged in "intense and widespread coercion" to block the union.

Stepping up enforcement actions nationwide, the immigration agency also deported more than 750 immigrants this week who were arrested in roundups in Los Angeles. More than 150 of the immigrants were fugitives from deportation proceedings, officials said.

**CONTRA COSTA TIMES**

Posted on Sat, Jan. 27, 2007

**Immigration push has Latinos wary**

**RICHMOND:** Deportation effort creates tension in community and causes stir among activists, business

leaders

By Kimberly S. Wetzel  
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Calling recent immigration sweeps in the region a "fishing expedition," members of West Contra Costa's Latino community said Friday that tactics used by federal officials were immoral and brought a "reign of terror" to the community.

Immigrant rights groups joined Latino public officials and business leaders Friday at St. Mark's Church in Richmond to say that federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents have purposely and unfairly targeted Latinos, misidentified themselves as police officers and illegally arrested people who are not on the deportation list.

"There has been a lot of fear," said the Rev. Ramiro Flores of St. Mark's. "We have lost the trust of the community."

ICE agents have knocked on doors of several people with deportation orders in Richmond and Concord in the past couple of weeks, in some cases detaining other household residents who could not show documentation.

That is within the realm of what Immigration officials can do, ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley said.

Several people charged this week that agents have gone beyond household arrests to detain people on the street, which is not allowed.

One woman at the St. Mark's news conference Friday who declined to give her name said her uncle was stopped by authorities while riding his bike on his way to work and later deported to Mexico. Haley said she has not heard of anyone being arrested while riding a bike.

"My kids were very afraid," she said. "They said, 'Why did they take my uncle?' It's very sad."

Haley said ICE agents have acted within the law to identify themselves as police officers and have not illegally arrested anyone. She said officials knock on the doors only of targeted individuals and do not accost people at random.

"Our arrests are targeted and return to sender," Haley said in a telephone interview. "We do not make random arrests, pulling people off the streets."

The targets have not just been Latinos, Haley said.

"We certainly do not target people by nationality," she said. "People are targeted because they are not following orders from an immigration judge to depart the country."

Friday's news conference was part of a concerted effort in recent days to put the pressure on ICE and get lawmakers to take notice. A community forum with a representative from the office of U.S. Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez, is scheduled for Sunday, when leaders hope to draft an official response to ICE and call for lawmakers to change or clarify policies on sweeps.

Latino community members said Friday that many now refuse to go outside for fear they will be arrested. Richmond City Councilman John Marquez said there has been a noticeable drop in business along the 23rd Street corridor, and Meadow Homes Elementary School in Concord had a significant dip in attendance after the sweeps last week.

West Contra Costa school district spokesman Paul Ehara said that absentee rates at Chavez and Downer elementaries -- both with large numbers of Latino students -- were higher than usual last week.



"They don't want to go outside; they don't want to send their kids to school; they don't want to go to the grocery store," said Richmond resident Jessica Peregrina. "This is really affecting our community."

Richmond High School Principal Orlando Ramos said about 150 fewer students than normal showed up for classes in the first couple of days after the sweeps. He said he has heard students at the mostly Latino school talking in the halls about how concerned they are. Fliers have been distributed outlining students' rights in the event ICE officials knock on their doors.

"The environment is definitely tense," Ramos said. "A lot of my students don't know where to go for information. They're very scared. Living in Richmond is stressful enough for these kids, and now you put this on top of it."

Reach Kimberly S. Wetzel at 510-262-2798 or kwetzel@cctimes.com.

If you go

- **WHAT:** A community forum with police, church officials, immigrant organizations and a member of U.S. Rep. George Miller's staff to discuss recent federal immigration sweeps
- **WHEN:** 3 p.m. Sunday
- **WHERE:** St. Mark's Church, 159 Harbour Way, Richmond

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business

## Raids point to call for reform

By Chuck Plunkett and Anne C. Mulkern  
Denver Post Staff Writers  
Denver Post

Article Last Updated:

Long before the federal raids at its meatpacking plants last month, Swift & Co. knew some of its workers had secured their jobs using stolen identities they had bought on the street.

Investigators from the Weld County district attorney's office had called and visited the plant, asking to talk to five workers suspected of identity theft.

Law enforcement uncovered the fraud after the Internal Revenue Service surprised people outside Colorado demanding back taxes for income earned at Swift.

"They said, 'We've never worked at Swift,'" Weld County District Attorney Ken Buck said.

The problem wasn't just in Greeley, and the number of illegal workers at Swift plants across the country provided a rich target for federal immigration agents.

And though the December raids at six Swift plants in six states came after November's dramatic defeat of Republicans in Congress, officials say the roundup of illegal workers advanced a goal of the Bush administration: emphasizing the need for an overhaul of immigration law, including a guest-worker program that lets businesses use foreign workers.

"I've made no secret about the fact we need a comprehensive program," Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said. Vigorous enforcement, he said, "clarifies the choices we have. ... The choices are clear, and the consequences of the choices are clear."

Besides the five cases his office discovered directly, Buck's office also learned of as many as 10 others in which police found illegal immigrants working at Swift.

Swift said it was following the law, and in fact, no Swift officials have been charged.

Nevertheless, concerns from Buck's office were mirrored in other jurisdictions with Swift plants, which led to subpoenas from Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for thousands of Swift employee records.

Late last year, Swift questioned hundreds of these workers. Four hundred left the company.

The raids also seemed designed to placate Republican lawmakers, including some who represented districts with Swift plants, who were criticizing immigration officials for failing to police illegal-immigrant labor.

Twice last year, congressional committees held field hearings in districts that include Swift plants. Meanwhile, immigration agents stepped up enforcement nationally, including a round of multistate raids at plants owned by a pallet-supply company called Ifco Systems.

By staging the raids in the weeks before Christmas - and costing Swift an estimated \$30 million in lost production and rehiring and training expenses - immigration officials presented a stark picture to Congress.

The raids also exposed flaws in the government's tool for screening for illegal workers, a computer database known as Basic Pilot. The program only verifies that a Social Security number is legitimate, not whether it is in use hundreds of miles away.

Swift told congressional committees twice last summer that Basic Pilot fails to catch fraud. A government report told Congress the same thing. Congress fought over immigration reform but let bills that would have addressed some of the problems die.

"What it demonstrates is that a raid makes more news than a GAO report," said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, referring to the June 2006 Government Accountability Office report that faulted Basic Pilot but resulted in no reform. "This has raised people's attention to a real problem."

By raiding a company like Swift, which voluntarily uses the Basic Pilot program, the government sent a signal to employers that the government's own program can't be trusted.

"We followed the rules," said Swift's general counsel, Don Wiseman. "Our employees shouldn't have had to suffer these indignities."

"They are trying to create a really big chill," Wiseman said. "They are doing indirectly what they can't do directly."

As long as 18 months ago, District Attorney Buck made immigration officials aware of as many as 10 cases of Swift workers who were illegal immigrants.

Early last year, ICE officials were tracking Swift. In March, they subpoenaed employment records from Swift's meatpacking plant in Marshalltown, Iowa. The probe then grew to Swift's other facilities.

While immigration officials built their case against Swift, Congress debated immigration reform and repeatedly complained that Homeland Security wasn't acting aggressively.

In May, the Senate approved legislation that would have solved one of the problems with Basic Pilot by allowing the Social Security Administration and the IRS to alert immigration officials to suspicious activity involving Social Security numbers.

The House blocked that legislation from becoming law.

Two months later, Rep. Tom Latham, R-Iowa, scolded Chertoff during a subcommittee hearing on Homeland Security, saying ICE ignored calls from police about employers that knowingly hired illegal workers.

Latham's district is home to Swift's Marshalltown plant, one of those raided last month. In an interview, Latham said the chief of police and other investigators had questioned the status of workers at the Swift plant for months before the raids. It was similar to what he told Chertoff.

"I've had local law enforcement people contact ICE over and over and over again about the known violators in the community," Latham told Chertoff, "and they just absolutely blow them off."

The exchange ended with Chertoff promising to get Latham's information to the head of ICE. Homeland Security officials heard similar complaints from others, including Rep. Sam Johnson, R-Texas, who represents a district where a Swift plant was raided, and who hosted a hearing in his district near Swift's Cactus plant.

"I have heard a lot about this issue from my constituents," Johnson said. "About four out of five calls and e-mails are from constituents who are fired up about our porous borders."

Swift also spoke about problems with Basic Pilot at a hearing in the Greeley district of Republican Rep. Marilyn Musgrave.

In September, Congress allocated money for beefed-up enforcement and 700 miles of fence at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Federal agencies dealing with immigration would "have to be blind to not realize there was a big enforcement message coming out of the Congress," said Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo. "They got the message."

While ICE built its case for the raids, Republicans controlled Congress. That shifted Nov. 7. Congress left town Dec. 9, without passing immigration reform. The raids came four days later.

How the raids might influence the new, Democratic-controlled Congress isn't clear.

Latham doubted it would have an impact. But Rep. Rob Bishop, a Republican who represents the Utah city where a Swift plant was raided, said the event "illustrates the system still is broken."

"Something has to be done on a whole bunch of different levels," Bishop said.

*Staff writers John Aloysius Farrell and Christa Marshall contributed to this report.*

*Al Día: Para leer este artículo en español. [denverpost.com/aldia](http://denverpost.com/aldia)*

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## Immigration sweeps a 'reign of terror'

**Latinos unfairly targeted for deportation by federal efforts, advocate groups say**

By Kimberly S. Wetzel, MEDIANEWS STAFF  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:

Calling recent immigration sweeps in the region a "fishing expedition," members of West Contra Costa's Latino community said Friday that tactics used by federal officials were immoral and brought a "reign of terror" to the community.

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That is within the realm of what immigration officials can do, ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley said.

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"We certainly do not target people by nationality," she said. "People are targeted because they are not following orders from an immigration judge to depart the country."

Latino community members said Friday that many now refuse to go outside for fear they will be arrested. Richmond City Councilman John Marquez said there has been a noticeable drop in business along the 23rd Street corridor, and Meadow Homes Elementary School in Concord had a significant dip in attendance after the sweeps last week.

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## Immigration sweeps a 'reign of terror'

**Latinos unfairly targeted for deportation by federal efforts, advocate groups say**

By Kimberly S. Wetzel, MEDIANEWS STAFF  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:01/29/2007 02:48:53 AM PST

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**SFGate**.com

## **RICHMOND**

### **Officials meet with public over immigration raids Police captain and mayor try to soothe fears of residents**

Delfin Vigil, Chronicle Staff Writer  
Monday, January 29, 2007

Richmond mayor Gayle McLaughlin offered support to nearly 1,000 residents who gathered Sunday afternoon to talk about an immigration sweep this month in which more than 100 undocumented immigrants were arrested in Contra Costa County.

"As the mayor, I'm here to give solidarity and support to families who in recent weeks have lived in a state of terror. I don't want our residents to live under terror," McLaughlin told the mainly Latino group in the gymnasium of St. Mark's Catholic Church in Richmond.

She said people are forced to migrate for survival, and that she intends to push forward a resolution to oppose the federal raids.

In "Operation Return To Sender," federal officials arrested 119 people in Contra Costa and deported 16 of them as of last week, according to Timothy Aitken, deputy director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in San Francisco. Some of the arrests were in Richmond.

Wearing uniforms that read "POLICE ICE" and using warrants, the agents targeted illegal immigrants with criminal records and those who evaded deportation orders. Of the 119 arrested, 18 were criminals and 94 were not on ICE's original wanted list, the immigration authority said.

The raids heightened fear and tension in largely immigrant communities. The meeting, organized by the Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization, was held to inform the public of their rights. An immigration lawyer advised people at the meeting on how to handle a situation in which they're approached by an ICE agent.

"These agents come to our people's doors pretending to be police, they break their windows and scare them," said the Rev. Ramiro Flores, who allowed the meeting to be held at St. Mark's. "When the agents can't find who they're looking for, they'll just take anyone without papers. That is a violation of civil rights."

Many at Sunday's meeting said they had come only because Flores convinced them that the ICE could not arrest them on church property. A few spoke about their own and their friends' experiences, including arrests made while parents dropped off children at schools or while shopping for groceries.

One woman, who was afraid to give her name for fear that she would be targeted, said her husband

was deported because a criminal once lived in their apartment. She said people who know her husband is gone have robbed her, but she won't call police for fear of being deported.

Richmond police Capt. Alec Griffin clarified his department's role in the raids.

"I'd like to tell you that we haven't worked with ICE in the last year, but that's not true," said Griffin, explaining that police detectives were tipped off by ICE with information on murder and gang cases. But he assured the crowd that the department's policy was not to respond to calls that involve only immigration complaints.

"We've worked hard to develop a relationship with the community," Griffin said. "If people are afraid to call police, that's a problem for all of us."

Council members Tony Thurmond, John Marquez and Ludmyrna Lopez sympathized with the crowd and said it was the city's responsibility to investigate the raids.

Also at Sunday's meeting were representatives from Democratic Rep. George Miller's, office and Kaye Burnside, West Contra Costa Unified School District's chief academic officer.

ICE officials were invited to the meeting but did not attend and were unavailable for comment.

*E-mail Delfin Vigil at [dvigil@sfchronicle.com](mailto:dvigil@sfchronicle.com).*

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/01/29/BAG69NQQB41.DTL>

This article appeared on page B - 5 of the San Francisco Chronicle

## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Posted on Mon, Jan. 29, 2007

### Fight over rights

By Tom Lochner  
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Several hundred immigrants and their supporters on Sunday denounced a recent wave of arrests and deportations of immigrants in the East Bay as a violation of basic human rights.

"I do not want our ... residents to live under terror," said Richmond Mayor Gayle McLaughlin. That is how "hundreds of thousands of families" have lived, she said, since Immigration and Customs Enforcement began a nationwide push in immigrant communities, including Richmond, San Pablo and Concord.

The National Fugitive Operations Program targets immigrants with deportation orders, especially those who have committed crimes, ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley has said.

Church leaders and immigrant advocacy groups say ICE violates its own hunting rules by rounding up and swiftly deporting people not on the list. They complain that ICE trawls for immigrants near schools and Latino markets. Haley said agents have the discretion to check out people not on the ICE list.

Critics also complain about ICE agents' use of the word "police" to gain access to homes, saying it undermines immigrants' trust in local police. Haley defended the practice, saying ICE agents are federal police.

McLaughlin spoke at an immigration forum at St. Mark Catholic Church hosted by Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization. Other speakers included Richmond council members Ludmyrna Lopez, John Marquez and Tony Thurmond; San Pablo council members Genoveva Garcia Calloway and Leonard McNeil; Pinole Mayor Maria Alegria; West Contra Costa schools official Kaye Burnside; Barbara Johnson, an aide to Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez; lawyer Mark Silverman; and the Rev. Ramiro Flores, St. Mark's pastor, who prayed for respect for immigrants' dignity.

Several people testified about encounters with ICE, among them Maria "Chuy" Ramos, whose daughter, 17, and son, 21, were arrested at home by ICE agents ostensibly targeting someone else. Ramos, whose children's plight was recently reported in the Times, said immigrants who do work no one else wants to do should not be denied human rights.

"For whom are the rights?" she asked. "For those who have the money? For those who have the power?"

Patricia Cadena said armed people shouting "police" took away her brother, niece, two nephews and a family friend from their San Pablo apartment Dec. 18. The niece, 17-year-old Richmond High School senior Montserrat Cadena, was eventually released and is seeking permission to stay in the country to complete her studies, her aunt said.

The others -- Jesus Cadena; his sons Hugo, 28, and Jesus Jr., 27; and another man she knows only as Rogello -- were deported to Mexico two weeks later, Patricia Cadena said.

"They didn't take the mom because she had just left for work," she said.

Her story resembles others around the East Bay, but with a twist: The officers who shouted "police" were just that, San Pablo police officers, according to Cadena.

No San Pablo police official could be reached for comment late Sunday.

Cadena said there previously had been some kind of dispute between her brother's family and some neighbors, and she thinks that is what brought police to the apartment. The four men were taken to County Jail in Martinez but were never charged with any crime, Cadena said, and ICE eventually stepped in.

Details of Cadena's story could not be verified Sunday.

McNeil said he does not know if San Pablo has a policy similar to Richmond's that bars local police from acting in tandem with ICE in most cases, but that if not, he would work toward one.

Immigration is a sensitive topic in San Pablo, where Mayor Paul Morris takes a tough stand on illegal immigration. In the campaign leading to his re-election to the council in November, Morris said illegal immigration is among the most serious problems facing the nation and that San Pablo police should enforce federal immigration laws.

McNeil took the historical perspective, thanking Mexicans for opposing a spread of slavery to their country, which he cited as an issue in the Mexican-American War of 1846-48. And during the 1930s, he noted, 2 million Mexicans were rounded up and deported, "much as is happening now."

McLaughlin blamed American economic and military policies for "a fair share" of the poverty and war in the world. "Our government shares in the responsibility for the forced migration for survival that has brought so many people here."

Richmond council members said they would introduce a resolution on Feb. 6 for the city to write a letter to federal authorities seeking an end to ICE's current operation and its methods.

McNeil and Calloway urged residents to pressure the San Pablo council to do likewise, and Pinole's Alegria said, "This is a struggle for basic human rights."

Reach Tom Lochner at 510-262-2760 or [tlochner@cctimes.com](mailto:tlochner@cctimes.com).

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## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Posted on Fri, Feb. 02, 2007

### Arrests cast pall over immigrants

**RICHMOND:** Except for day laborers, many afraid to shop or send children to school, officials say fear based on rumors

By Tom Lochner  
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Latino immigrants and their advocates say a recent nationwide enforcement action by federal agents has sown terror in some East Bay communities and made people afraid to take their children to school, shop at neighborhood markets or otherwise go about their normal routines.

But Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Operation Return to Sender seems to have had little impact on one of Contra Costa County's best-known immigrant labor gathering spots.

At Home Depot astride the Richmond-El Cerrito border, this week was business as usual or close to it, according to the day laborers who congregate on the periphery and the private security officers who keep them out of the store's parking lot.

"It's basically the same," said Al MacDonald, a Pinkerton guard and retired sergeant who served 27 years with a municipal police department in Marin County. Two Saturdays ago, at the height of the most recent ICE scare, MacDonald and his partner, another retired police officer, counted 166 men looking for gigs from the people who shop at Home Depot. There are about 80 men on an average weekday, they said.

That's about the number of men that stood in clusters on San Pablo Avenue in El Cerrito on Wednesday from Home Depot north almost to Macdonald Avenue, calling out or motioning to motorists headed into the store parking lot. Others stood around the corner on Wall Avenue on the Richmond side. Many acknowledged they lack documents allowing them to stay in the United States. Several said they knew of ICE raids at the Richmond, El Cerrito Del Norte and Hayward BART stations, although only one said he had actually seen one.

"I haven't seen them (ICE agents)," said one man, who did not give a name but said he was from Mexico and had come to Home Depot almost every morning for a month.

"And I don't want to see them," he added, as the rest of his group broke into laughter.

Elsewhere in the East Bay, residents and immigrant advocates said ICE agents have detained people, seemingly at random, causing great fear in the immigrant population. Francisco Flores, owner of Taqueria y Mercado La Guarecita in San Pablo, said business is down

"Look at 23rd Street," Flores said. "It's a desert. I've lost 60 percent of my business in the last four weeks."

Richmond High School's daily attendance was down by about 150 students the first couple of days after the sweeps began, according to school officials. Twice the normal number of students were absent at Concord's Meadow Homes Elementary School one day last month.

Immigrant advocacy groups have mobilized, sponsoring rallies and community forums warning people of ICE sweeps.

ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley said Thursday that the stories of ICE dragnets and mass arrests are utterly false and that her agency has been targeting people with deportation orders, with special emphasis on those who have committed crimes.

"These are not random arrests," she said. "We're absolutely not doing that. All of the arrests are based on leads and intelligence." However, she added, "if we are looking for a particular target and in the course of that we come across other people who we believe are in the country illegally, they are subject to arrest."

According to Haley, Operation Return to Sender resulted in 119 arrests in Contra Costa County from Jan. 8 to 19, including 20 "immigration fugitives" who did not obey deportation orders.

"The others were immigration violators without legal status," she said.

Nationwide, Operation Return to Sender has logged more than 13,000 arrests since it began in June, Haley said. There are an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the country.

Rumors spread by word-of-mouth, church groups and Spanish-language media fueled a similar popular scare in April. It featured stories of ICE agents supposedly plucking immigrants off the streets by the vanfull, prompting an inquiry to ICE from U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Oakland, who eventually pronounced the rumors untrue.

At a community forum on immigration Sunday at Richmond's St. Mark Church, critics complained that local police sometimes cooperate with ICE agents in cases where immigration should not be an issue. One speaker spoke about five people arrested by San Pablo police Dec. 18. Four, all men, were later deported, the speaker said, adding that none was charged with a crime.

That is false, San Pablo Police Cmdr. Mark Foisie said Thursday. At least one of the men was charged with assault by the district attorney. The arrest happened during a violent, alcohol-fueled altercation between the four men and some neighbors that involved a baseball bat around 8 that morning, Foisie said.

An ICE agent happened to be in the area of the San Pablo police station that day.

"She determined that some or all of them shouldn't be here," Foisie said. "So she did the administrative paperwork."

San Pablo Police do not ask about immigration status during booking, Foisie said.

Reach Tom Lochner at 510-262-2760 or [tlochner@cctimes.com](mailto:tlochner@cctimes.com).

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## Immigrants in Richmond live in fear of deportation

### Residents complaining of rights violations gain local officials' support

By David DeBolt, CORRESPONDENT  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:02/03/2007 02:46:40 AM PST

RICHMOND — Before leaving her Richmond apartment, Jenni Spezeski peeks out the front door and looks down both ends of the street. She is looking to see if any agents from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency, who have recently been cracking down and arresting illegal immigrants in Richmond, are waiting outside.

But it's not Spezeski they're after. Once the graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, who grew up in Arizona, determines it is safe to leave, she escorts her fianc out the door. He is identified only as Junior, an illegal immigrant from Brazil who came to the United States four years ago.

Spezeski said she and her fianc are afraid of ICE, which has arrested more than 100 residents in Richmond and Concord within the last few weeks. They have considered moving out of Richmond to avoid Junior's possible arrest or deportation.

"We've thought of moving to Canada," Spezeski said. "But I have a job and stability here, and I have to think about the future."

The couple were part of a packed audience at a public forum Sunday at St. Mark's Church in Richmond, where local residents, including legal and illegal immigrants, met with city officials, politicians and police. Residents spoke who have been affected by the ICE raids, which the government has carried out as part of Operation Return to Sender. The forum was organized by the church and the Contra Costa Interfaith Sponsoring Committee. The government effort began in June.

While ICE officials have said the agency targets individuals who are illegal immigrants with criminal histories or gang involvement, residents complained that people who have not been in any kind of trouble have been picked up while ICE has been searching for targeted individuals.

Ruben Gonzales, a Richmond resident, said ICE recently entered his home without a warrant and without knocking. They broke the door, he said on Sunday.

"I was only in my underwear," Gonzales said. The federal officials made his wife, his grandchild and a family friend lie on the floor.

Local officials, including Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, have spoken out recently in defense of the city's immigrant population.

"I do not want our residents to live under terror," McLaughlin said Sunday.

Casa de Esperanza, a nonprofit organization housed at St. Mark's, has been working on a resolution to bring before the Richmond City Council on Tuesday.

As of Jan. 22, federal officials said they had arrested 119 people, primarily in Richmond and Concord. Sixteen were deported. In a Jan. 23 news release, ICE reported removing more than 750 foreigners from Southern California. The news release also said, "Since its launch in June 2006, Operation Return to Sender has resulted in more than 13,000 arrests nationwide."

Junior said many of the illegal immigrants in the Brazilian community were too afraid to attend Sunday's event.

"They didn't show up," he said outside the church. "They thought ICE would be here at the door." Junior, who runs his own construction company, employs workers from Brazil. It has been hard for them to focus at work the last few weeks, he said.

"They couldn't work because they would watch up the street to see if anyone was coming for them," he said. The couple said their fear partly stems from stories they have heard from friends and neighbors. They said one of their friends abandoned his apartment with his family to hide from ICE. The friend returned to the apartment to pick up more clothes for the family, but when he arrived he saw ICE agents outside the residence.

"They did a quick U-turn," Spezeski said. A friend of Junior's was arrested with his wife and a family friend when ICE entered their home at 6 a.m. looking for someone else, Junior said. The three were arrested because they lacked documentation, Junior said.

After a short time in jail, the three posted bail and now have six months to appeal their court ruling or go back to Brazil. They were at St. Mark's on Sunday and said they were afraid to give their names.

"I never was an activist, but this has gotten me out there," Spezeski said. She has been copying fliers explaining illegal immigrants' rights in dealing with the police and federal agents. She said ignorance of rights can result in "people (being) taking advantage of."

At St. Mark's Church, Mark Silverman, a staff attorney at Immigrant Legal Resource Center, explained immigration and other civil rights to the crowd, using demonstrations and skits to help them understand those rights.

Silverman told the audience to demand to see a badge before opening the door for police and to ask for the warrant to be slid under the door before opening it.

"Whether you are a citizen or undocumented, we are all protected by the Fourth and Fifth Amendments (to the U.S. Constitution)," he said.

Spezeski and Junior remain unsure about where the next few months will take them. Because of their jobs, they said they don't anticipate moving away soon. Spezeski said they have recently been staying in hotels in other East Bay cities such as Pinole, but that has become too costly.

Junior is saving \$1,000 to send to his mother in Brazil to help pay for her much-needed surgery.

"In that sense, there's no money for a deposit," she said. "We are afraid to walk out the door, and that's not the life we want to be living."



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## U.S. immigration sweeps hitting Peninsula area

### Seven San Mateo County residents taken into federal custody

By Michael Manekin and Kelly Pakula, STAFF WRITER  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated: 02/07/2007 02:44:13 AM PST

REDWOOD CITY — Two children walked out the door of their Redwood City elementary school last week, expecting their mother to pick them up. But she was nowhere to be found.

Between the start of the school day and the ring of the final bell, the woman had been taken into custody by federal immigration agents.

The children, both U.S. citizens, are among dozens of family and friends feeling the brunt of a recent federal immigration sweep targeting Latinos in San Mateo County, according to the International Institute of San Francisco, an immigrant rights group with an office in Redwood City.

The raids have detained at least seven residents, say local police, some of whom have expressed concern that the federal campaign could hinder hard-won efforts to forge bonds with immigrant communities by deterring victims or witnesses of crimes from assisting departments in solving crimes.

The sweeps, conducted by U.S. Department of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, are part of a national campaign dubbed "Operation Return to Sender." Launched in June, the operation is cracking down on illegal immigrants with outstanding deportation orders or criminal records.

So far, "Operation Return to Sender" has led to 13,000 arrests nationwide, according to Virginia Rice of ICE. Last year, immigration officials detained 1,077 individuals in the Bay Area, of whom 813 were deported. Although Rice could not confirm past local operations, immigration advocates and local law enforcement say that the current operations are the first heavy sweeps which federal authorities have undertaken on the Peninsula since at least 2004.

"The entire community is affected by this," said Larisa Casillas, director of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition. "Kids are afraid to leave their homes. Parents don't want to take their kids to school. We've heard of instances where employees don't want to leave their homes ... to go to work."

In the Bay Area, where federal authorities operate two "fugitive operation teams," ICE agents have targeted the home addresses of individuals believed to be in violation of the law. According to Rice, agents routinely pick up individuals with neither criminal records nor outstanding deportation orders.

"People are getting picked up because they just happen to open the door at the wrong time," said Sheryl Bergman of the International Institute of San Francisco. "That affects our community."

Nonetheless, Rice says the primary targets of the sweeps are those "who have significant criminal histories."

"We are targeting the worst of the worst," she added. "Many of these individuals are preying on other immigrants in the community."

But local law enforcement is ambiguous about the true effects of the sweeps on the community. In Redwood City, where police have confirmed that seven people been taken into custody by federal agents, the city's police department held a community meeting Monday night to assure residents that local police did not participate in the sweeps. Redwood City Police Chief Louis Cobarruviaz said the department was never even contacted by the federal agency — informed of the raids, instead, by residents.

Another goal of the meeting, according to Capt. Chris Cesena, was to "dispel any rumors" in the community. Among the gossip swirling in town, according to residents: ICE agents had been seen on school grounds and the local Boys & Girls Club, preparing to drag children out of class. According to another erroneous account, ICE agents reportedly broke into one family's home while the terrified children hid in a closet.

"The rumors are just flying," said Anna Lange-Soto, the pastor of El Buen Pastor, an Episcopalian church in Redwood City,

adding that the city and law enforcement are working to quell such talk.

Lt. Tom Alipio, of the East Palo Alto Police Department, expressed concern that the ICE raids could damage community relations, adding that city police do not meddle in enforcing immigration status. "If you're living in the community and you're contributing to the community, I could care less your status," said Alipio.

For Joe Gallardo, a Mexican-born East Palo Alto resident who became a U.S. citizen five years ago, the immigration sweeps only feed fear and resentment among the Latino community.

"I respect the law of the United States, which is better than (the law) in other countries, than even my country," said Gallardo. "But sometimes I think it's a little unjust when they try to throw the blame on us as illegal, treating us as terrorists."

Lange-Soto of El Buen Pastor believes that one of the most "upsetting" aspects of the sweeps is the irony that lawmakers are considering several immigration reform bills which would legalize many of those inadvertently caught up in the federal operations, those who were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

For Casillas of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition, the raids are "an intimidation tactic" warning immigrants that it's best not to "speak out for their rights and come out of the shadows."

"I don't really see any benefits in the raids," said Casillas. "There's no benefit in threatening an entire community. There's no benefit in scaring families, or in ripping people out of their communities. Right now we're engaging this national dialogue around immigration, and we all agree that the system is broken and needs to be fixed."

Staff writer Michael Manekin can be reached at (650) 348-4331 or by e-mail at [mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com). Staff writer Kelly Pakula can be reached at (650) 348-4339 or by e-mail at [kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com).

KCBS

Posted: Wednesday, 07 February 2007 12:46PM

## Redwood City School Attendance Lower After Immigration Raids

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. (KCBS) -- The recent raids in Contra Costa County to net illegal immigrants are taking a toll on those who live in the community, from business to school attendance.



Redwood City school officials have been trying to reassure parents who fear they will be caught up in the sweep if they take their children to school. Students are also feeling the tension, especially those too young to understand stories of Latinos taken away by agents.

Many say the raids have created a "reign of terror," and local Latino leaders have questioned the tactics used by the INS. They say federal agents misidentified themselves, arrested some people who were not listed for deportation, and targeted predominantly Latino neighborhoods.



[KCBS' Holly Quan has more from Redwood City](#)



(RdD)

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## City seeks calm after raids on immigrants

Federal agents targeted criminals, but others were swept up as well

By Melissa McRobbie / Daily News Staff Writer

Recent raids in Redwood City by federal immigration officials have left some community members jittery, with parents in some cases hesitating to drop their kids off at school for fear of being arrested, local police say.

City leaders are planning to meet with residents Thursday in the hopes of quelling those fears.

The raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, targeted illegal immigrants with outstanding deportation orders or criminal records.

However, in the course of such operations, noncriminal immigrants who are in the country illegally may be picked up as well, said ICE spokeswoman Virginia Kice. She confirmed that arrests had been made in Redwood City, but said she did not know how many.

The International Institute of San Francisco, an immigrant rights group with an office in Redwood City, reported Monday that it had been contacted by the families of at least seven people who were arrested.

One of the detainees is a parent of a child at Hoover Magnet School, principal Greg Land said. That person's child is now staying with a family friend. Land said "quite a few" parents called the school last week after hearing that raids had occurred nearby. He emphasized that district rules prohibit federal immigration agents from being on school grounds.

Redwood City's new police chief, Louis Cobarruviaz, said he had heard some parents were dropping off their children a block away from the school to avoid possible arrest. Cobarruviaz worried that the raids, which took the city by surprise, will damage the department's ongoing efforts to build rapport with the Latino community.

City officials sent out a press release Tuesday to emphasize to residents that the Police Department's role is separate from that of ICE.

"The city assures all members of the community that they should feel completely comfortable in calling the Redwood City police for assistance or to report a crime, no matter what their immigration status," the statement reads.

Cobarruviaz said that although he understands the need for secrecy in federal operations, he wishes ICE had contacted the department. "It would be good if they would so that we could let people know what the facts are," he said.

Kice said notification of local authorities depends on the circumstances of each operation. However, she said, "I would say it's probably more often the case that we do inform them."


She said that between Oct. 1 and mid-January, ICE's three Northern California

operations teams arrested 515 people in similar operations. Last fiscal year, 1,077 arrests were made.

A community meeting will be held on the topic at 2 p.m. Thursday at the Fair Oaks Community Center at 2600 Middlefield Road. School officials, Cobarruviaz and at least one City Council member are expected to attend.

E-mail Melissa McRobbie at [mmcrobbe@dailynewsgroup.com](mailto:mmcrobbe@dailynewsgroup.com).

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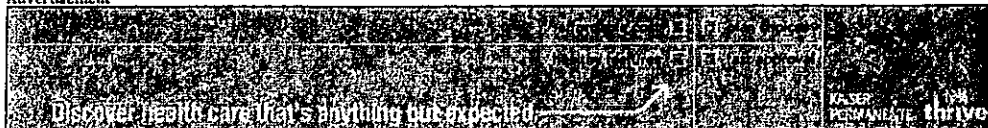
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## CBS 5 - San Francisco Bay Area's source for news, weather, traffic and sports: Richmond Calls For End To Feds' Immigration Raids

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### CBS 5 Investigates With Anna Werner

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## Richmond Calls For End To Feds' Immigration Raids



Anna Werner  
Reporting

(CBS 5) RICHMOND The Richmond City Council is officially calling for an end to raids by federal immigration agents.

"I really don't believe that any of our residents should be living in a climate of fear and terror like this," said Mayor Gayle McLaughlin.

McLaughlin, in office barely a month, is already holding a news conference denouncing the immigration raids in her city.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement said in those raids, taking place in Richmond and nationwide, that it's only going after illegal immigrants with criminal convictions or deportation orders. But McLaughlin said accounts from residents suggest otherwise.

"People who have no real criminal behavior at all have been unjustly placed under arrest," she said.

She said she'd take the word of her city's residents over that of ICE officials who say the raids are targeted.

"People just came and spoke from their heart and were so clearly concerned and in a state of fear and wanting to register that something needs to be done," McLaughlin said. "I was totally convinced. There was no doubt in my mind that this was happening."

So a new resolution passed by the city council Tuesday night calls for a moratorium on those raids until Congress takes up immigration reform.

It also calls for ICE agents to clearly state they are not Richmond police.

The resolution also says Richmond's police department will not cooperate with immigration agents in going after undocumented immigrants.

Richmond police Capt. Alec Griffin told CBS 5 that ICE is hurting local law enforcement efforts.

Protests are growing against the ICE raids, and now elected officials from other East Bay communities like San Pablo are talking about enacting their own resolutions.

"We need dialogue. We need understanding. We need compassion," said San Pablo city councilman Leonard McNell. "We don't need xenophobia, and we don't need fear and uncertainties. And I don't think that the ICE should be misrepresenting themselves as police and rounding up people without due process."

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Printed from THE DAILY JOURNAL, dtd. 02/07/2007

## Immigration raids put city on edge

By Dana Yates

Some parents are keeping their children from school in Redwood City after reports of surprise immigration raids began to circulate late last week.

Agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement were reportedly in Redwood City on Thursday and Friday. Parents reported to school officials that federal immigration agents were stopping people for identification near Hoover Elementary School on Thursday and Friday. Others reported agents picked up day laborers at the corner of Fifth Avenue and El Camino Real on the same days.

"There is a lot of concern in the community about this operation. We are helping families of seven individuals who were picked up," said Sheryl Bergman of the International Institute, an organization with a Redwood City office that helps residents with immigration legal issues.

At least two families have small children who were in danger of being left at school last week before friends were able to step in and take care of them, Bergman said.

The ICE detention and removal division is conducting the enforcement operation. The investigation division and the U.S. Attorney's Office are not involved.

While there are a lot of "rumors" circulating, ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley said she could not confirm or deny any reports.

"The Department of Homeland Security has an ambitious, multi-year national plan to shore up our borders and reduce illegal immigration. A key element of that plan is stepped up interior enforcement, including expanded efforts to identify and arrest immigration fugitives — that is aliens who are ordered deported and willfully ignore those orders," Haley said in a statement released Monday.

Last week's enforcement action was targeted at people with standing warrants or deportation orders. However, such operations often pick up other people because many illegal immigrants live, work or travel in the same areas, Bergman said.

Parents worried about being stopped by agents appear to be keeping their children from school. Attendance at Hoover, Taft, Fair Oaks and Roosevelt elementary schools dropped this week, said Jan Christensen, superintendent of the Redwood City Elementary School District.

Parents reported to administrators at Hoover that agents were stopping people on streets near the school, Christensen said.

Meanwhile Redwood City police and public officials are reassuring residents they were not involved in the enforcement action. Some appeared frustrated by ICE's failure to notify local police or the school district about the enforcement action — either before or after people were detained.

"Our priority is very simple — it's public safety in our neighborhoods, and that is dependent on our police building relationships throughout the community without regard to anyone's immigration status," said Redwood City Mayor Barbara Pierce. "The confusion of having federal agents mistaken as local police does not help that effort."

Councilman Jeff Ira agreed adding that children should be kept in mind and there should be no police action that results in children missing school.

By matter of policy, Redwood City police do not participate in immigration operations unless there is a clear concern for officer safety, said Redwood City police Capt. Chris Cesena.

The department was slightly frustrated federal agents didn't bother giving Redwood City police a heads up. It would help police if people called 911 about reports of men with guns on the street, Cesena said.

Meanwhile, representatives of Barrios Unidos will hold a meeting 2 p.m. Thursday at Fair Oak Community Center to discuss the issue with concerned residents. School officials will also be present.

The International Institute holds regular informational meetings 9a.m. every Monday in Redwood City. The meetings help residents understand their rights, including the right to remain silent and the right to refuse agents entrance to one's homes without a warrant, Bergman said.

Dana Yates can be reached by e-mail: [dana@smdailyjournal.com](mailto:dana@smdailyjournal.com) or by phone: (650) 344-5200 ext. 106. What do you think of this story? Send a letter to the editor: [letters@smdailyjournal.com](mailto:letters@smdailyjournal.com).



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### West County Times (Richmond, CA)

February 8, 2007

Section: News

Edition: FINAL

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#### Officials try to ease residents' concerns

After immigration crackdown in January, council reaffirms 1990 reform resolution

*John Geluardi*  
Times Staff Writer

The Richmond City Council on Tuesday night called for humane immigration reforms that would allow families to live, work and study without fear of being indiscriminately arrested. The council unanimously reaffirmed a 1990 resolution after last month's weeklong crackdown on illegal immigrants by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. The sweeps resulted in more than 200 arrests in Contra Costa County, mostly in Richmond and Concord.

About 300 members of the Latino community, many with small children in tow, filed into the council chamber Tuesday carrying placards that read "Stop Separating Families" and "Freedom in Richmond."

"We came here to support this resolution," San Pablo resident Jessica Peregrina said. "We came because what the law is doing is unfair and unjust to immigrants, and it has to be changed."

Speakers told the council that the sweeps have left thousands of people living in fear of being arrested in their homes, at work or while shopping at the grocery store.

"Children are afraid to go to school, and they are afraid their mothers won't come back from doing the laundry and their fathers won't come back from work," one speaker said.

Richmond High School, attended mostly by Latinos, experienced a drop in attendance by about 150 students after the immigration arrests, Principal Orlando Ramos said Wednesday.

"We could not pinpoint it to the immigration raids, but based on what the kids were saying, it was because some students were afraid to come to school," Ramos said.

There also were higher-than-normal absentee rates at Chavez and Downer elementary schools — which both have large numbers of Latino students — after the raids.

In addition to the council's resolution, Richmond police Chief Chris Magnus received hearty applause when he assured those in the council chamber that the police department had no part in last month's sweeps and would not take part in any future federal immigration actions.

"We have worked very hard to build the best possible partnership with everyone in the community regardless of race, ethnicity and immigration status, and we don't want to jeopardize that," he said. "We want all of our residents to feel comfortable working with the police."

ICE agents regularly identified themselves as "police" in the course of last month's raids, which has fostered mistrust between immigrants and local authorities.

ICE officials repeatedly have said agents acted within the law to identify themselves as police and did not illegally arrest anyone. They said officials knocked on the doors only of targeted individuals and did not accost people at random.

The enforcement action, dubbed Operation Return To Sender, resulted in the arrests of 119 targeted immigrants and 94 undocumented immigrants in Contra Costa. About half are Mexican citizens, and the rest are from Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize, India, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Afghanistan and Fiji.

Nationally, more than 13,000 illegal immigrants have been arrested since the operation was launched in June.

The council approved the first immigration reform resolution in 1990 after a massive one-day sweep. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies cordoned off a large section of downtown and began arresting people indiscriminately.

"This struggle is nothing new in Richmond," said Councilman John Marquez, who was a member of the council in 1990. "These agencies encircled the downtown and arrested people indiscriminately."

"They brutalized innocent people who happened to be in the area," he said.

Among those arrested was a decorated U.S. Marine. Federal officers threw him to the ground, injuring his shoulder and breaking his glasses, when he could not produce a green card.

Reach John Geluardi at 510-262-2787 or [jgeluardi@cctimes.com](mailto:jgeluardi@cctimes.com).

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## Richmond pledges to keep immigrants feeling safe

### City Council calls for humane action; police will not take part in federal immigration sweeps

By John Geluardi, MEDIANEWS STAFF  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated: 02/09/2007 02:40:17 AM PST

The Richmond City Council on Tuesday night called for humane immigration reforms that would allow families to live, work and study without fear of being indiscriminately arrested.

The council unanimously reaffirmed a 1990 resolution following last month's week-long crackdown on illegal immigrants by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. The sweeps resulted in more than 200 Contra Costa County arrests, mostly in Richmond and Concord.

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There also were higher than normal absentee rates at Chavez and Downer elementaries — both schools with large numbers of Latino students — after the raids.

In addition to the council's resolution, Richmond police Chief Chris Magnus received hearty applause when he assured those in the council chamber that the police department had no part in last month's sweeps and would not take part in any future federal immigration actions.

"We have worked very hard to build the best possible partnership with everyone in the community regardless of race, ethnicity and immigration status, and we don't want to jeopardize that," he said.

ICE agents regularly identified themselves as "police" in the course of last month's raids, which has fostered mistrust between immigrants and local authorities.

ICE officials repeatedly have said agents acted within the law to identify themselves as police and did not illegally arrest anyone. They said officials knocked on the doors only of targeted individuals and did not accost people at random.

The enforcement action, dubbed Operation Return To Sender, resulted in the arrests of 119 targeted immigrants and another 94 undocumented immigrants in Contra Costa. About half are Mexican citizens, and the rest are from Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize, India, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Afghanistan and Fiji.

Nationally more than 13,000 illegal immigrants have been arrested since the operation was launched in June.

The council approved the first immigration reform resolution in 1990 after a massive, one-day sweep. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies cordoned off a large section of the downtown and began arresting people indiscriminately.

"This struggle is nothing new in Richmond," said Councilman John Marquez, who was a member of the council in 1990. "These agencies encircled the downtown and arrested people indiscriminately."

"They brutalized innocent people who happened to be in the area," he said.

Among those arrested was a decorated U.S. Marine. Federal officers threw him to the ground, injuring his shoulder and breaking his glasses, when he could not produce a green card.

Contact John Geluardi at 510-262-2787 or at [jgeluardi@cctimes.com](mailto:jgeluardi@cctimes.com).

washingtonpost.com

## Immigration Raid Leaves Texas Town a Skeleton

By Sylvia Moreno  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Friday, February 9, 2007; A02

CACTUS, Tex. -- The streets of this small, isolated city in the Texas Panhandle are virtually empty nowadays, and "For Rent" signs decorate dilapidated trailers and shabby 1940s-era military barracks that just weeks ago were full of tenants.

Sales of tortillas and other staples are down. Money wire transactions to Central America have mostly dried up. The "Guatemalas," as local residents call them, are almost all gone, and so are a significant number of Mexican nationals. An estimated 12 to 18 children are now living with only one parent since the other was arrested in a massive immigration raid at the biggest employer in town.

On Dec. 12, hundreds of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents clad in riot gear and armed with assault rifles descended on the Swift & Co. meatpacking plant in a coordinated raid of six of the company's facilities nationwide. The operation was the government's largest single work-site enforcement operation ever. The plant in little Cactus -- a town better known in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, and in the department of Quiché, Guatemala, where workers came from, than in Texas -- was the largest one raided. Almost a quarter of the 1,282 suspected illegal immigrants arrested in the raids were removed from the Cactus plant.

That an obscure town 600 miles north of the border and in the middle of High Plains country once owned by Anglo ranchers and farmers was a haven for illegal Mexican and Central American immigrants was no surprise to anyone here. The draw to Cactus has existed since American Beef Packers opened the meat-processing plant in 1974. Swift's predecessor company bought the plant in 1975, and it became known as Swift & Co.'s Cactus Beef Plant in 2002.

Although opened with local hires, Vietnamese and Laotian refugees became the dominant workforce by the late-1970s. By the mid-'80s the workforce was overwhelmingly Mexican immigrants, and by 2000 the Guatemalans, speaking the Mayan language of Quiché, had started to arrive. Before the Dec. 12 raid, Swift employed 3,050 workers in Cactus at a starting wage of \$11.50 an hour to slaughter, process and package several thousand head of cattle daily.

Work inside the plant is hard, dirty, stinky and dangerous, and it is where Cactus's biggest business owner and mayor, Luis Aguilar, and Cactus's largest landlord, Thanh Nguyen, got their starts in the United States. Aguilar, a native of Chihuahua, began working at the plant in 1976 using false identity papers, he admits. In 1986, he was able to legalize his status in the United States, along with 2.7 million illegal workers, under the amnesty program authorized by the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act.

Previously criticized by some local officials who thought he aided and even encouraged illegal immigrants to settle in Cactus, Aguilar took the raids almost personally. He canceled the annual city

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Christmas party because so many residents, including City Council members, had spouses or other relatives who had been arrested by immigration authorities. Aguilar subsequently lent one of his buildings to be used as a food and used-clothing pantry for residents whose relatives were caught in the raid.

"These are my people," said Aguilar, 50, who today owns the largest house in Cactus, a nearby 575-acre ranch, a laundromat and the town's only full-fledged grocery store. About half of his 26 rental units are empty now.

Nguyen and his family, part of the mass exodus of "boat people" who left Vietnam after the fall of Saigon, arrived as legal refugees in nearby Dumas, Tex., in 1979 under the sponsorship of a restaurant owner who wanted cheap labor. Within six months, Nguyen and his wife left for the better-paying meatpacking plant in Cactus, said Nguyen's son Phuong, 37, who is also known as Ben.

Except for the Nguyens, Asian immigrants moved out of Cactus, which is now 99.5 percent Hispanic. Some local officials recently said that 75 percent of the city's estimated 5,000 residents before the raid were illegal immigrants. Aguilar disputes that, saying it was only 15 percent.

To Ben Nguyen, that number is not important. His father usually offered a few weeks of free rent to immigrants until they got a job at the meat plant and their first paycheck and provided thrift store mattresses and clothes, if necessary, Nguyen said. Now only eight of his father's 60 rental units are occupied. Some were vacated the day of the raid, but the majority were abandoned within weeks, when frightened immigrants moved away. Since then, vandals have been kicking in the doors of the empty apartments, looking for any items of value that might have been left behind.

"I do believe in punishment for the crime, but this is too much," Ben Nguyen said. "You scare kids; you push people so far away that you destroy the economy of the town. . . . This town is built by immigrants. They were just like me when they come over here. They didn't have anything. They came over here just to work and start their lives."

But authorities charge that these immigrants had false identity documents, enabling them to get driver's licenses and jobs illegally, victimizing U.S. citizens and fueling the fraudulent document industry. Traffic stops or crime reports became confusing events in Cactus in recent years. Immigrants would offer two names, said former Cactus Police Chief Tim Turley. They had "el verdadero," as they called it - the true name -- and their work name.

Mario Lux, 26, from the town of Canilla in Quiché, said the piece of paper that gave him his work name cost him \$1,400 and was obtained for him by a friend in Cactus. With that document, Lux said he got an identification card in nearby New Mexico and then a job at the Swift plant in March 2006, cutting fat and gristle off meat for \$11.90 an hour. He was not working the day of the raid but now will not return for fear of being discovered and arrested. He says that he still owes \$3,200 to the smuggling network that got him to Cactus and that he has been unable to send money to his wife and three children back home. He is also three weeks behind in his rent. He and his three roommates pay \$120 a week for their small apartment.

"I have no idea how I will pay that now," Lux said as he stood in the food and clothes pantry established in the Cactus town center.

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## Redwood City holds meeting to ease immigrants' fears

### Officials work to calm Latino community after federal sweeps

By Michael Manekin, STAFF WRITER  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:02/09/2007 02:46:37 AM PST

REDWOOD CITY — More than 150 concerned residents crowded a community center in the heavily Latino North Fair Oaks neighborhood Thursday to address what immigrant rights advocates and police are calling the most serious immigration crackdown in years.

Since federal immigration agents began to sweep the city for illegal immigrants last week, at least seven have been arrested, possibly to be deported. Meanwhile, the city's large Latino community continues to live in palpable fear that "La Migra" could swoop down — anytime, anywhere.

At Thursday's meeting, the largely Mexican and Salvadorean crowd was met by city and county officials, local law enforcement and dozens of immigrant advocates, all of whom have banded together with a purpose: to sort reality from rumor, explain legal rights and, perhaps most importantly, pacify a panicked community.

Numerous Latinos have avoided city streets whenever possible. School attendance has dropped as parents have resisted walking their kids to school. Even the city's ubiquitous migrant workers have kept a low profile.

The recent sweeps, conducted by the U.S. Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, are part of Operation Return to Sender, a nationwide crackdown on illegal immigrants with outstanding deportation orders or criminal records. While ICE defends the sweeps as targeting individuals with criminal histories, officials acknowledge that the agency routinely picks up individuals with neither criminal records nor outstanding deportation orders.

This indiscriminate detention of illegals with clean histories is what rankles local immigration advocates, and the community meeting offered a refresher on the "to-do's" and "not-to-do's" in the event of a run-in with La Migra, including such important lessons as refusing an ICE agent entry into one's home unless a search warrant is produced.

Redwood City police Chief Louis Cobarruviaz, a Mexican American, assured the crowd in Spanish that the city had not cooperated in the recent ICE sweeps, saying local law enforcement would not check on anyone's immigration status except in the event of a serious crime.

City Councilwoman Alicia Aguirre went one step further, offering immigrants unequivocal support by imploring the assembled to "educate yourselves, spread the word and don't answer La Migra."

Only, for some city residents, there is only so much one can do in the face of federal immigration agents — a truth that Gina Castaneda of Redwood City knows all too well. Last Thursday, on the first day of the sweeps, she received a frantic phone call from a good friend. La Migra was already in her apartment, responding to a deportation order issued in 2003.

For Castaneda's friend, who was applying for residency, the order was a shock, but there was nothing she could do. By the time Castaneda arrived at the house, her friend was handcuffed in the back of an ICE van. Meanwhile, Castaneda is caring for the woman's two children.

"I feel outrage," said Castaneda, containing her resentment in the community center's hallway. "I'm furious that they would take her away and leave her children alone."

Robert Genevro, one of a handful of non-Latino residents to attend the meeting, also came in anger.

"No immigrants should be targeted whatsoever," he said. "Most of the reason the people come over here is due to economic problems perpetrated directly by the United States."

But for most, the meeting was, first and foremost, educational.



Maria Leon, a city resident for the last 21 years and a mother of five U.S. citizens ranging in age from 3 to 21, was here because she wanted to learn exactly how to best avoid a threat that could separate her from her children.

"I feel degraded, frustrated, angry, everything," said Leon, supporting the weight of her youngest daughter Diana on her hip.

Above all, Leon said, she was scared. She hadn't left the house much since this past week — except to take her kids to school. That, she said, was worth the risk.

"It's important they learn, get their degrees and become good citizens."

Staff writer Michael Manekin can be reached at (650) 348-4331 or by e-mail at [mmanekin@sanamteocountytimes.com](mailto:mmanekin@sanamteocountytimes.com).

KCBS

Posted: Saturday, 10 February 2007 8:29AM

## Students Face Tough Choices After Immigration Raids



RICHMOND, Calif. (KCBS) -- The recent immigration raids in the East Bay, blamed for creating a "reign of terror" for many Latinos, are also forcing some high school students to follow their deported parents back to their homeland.

One Richmond high school student said her friend went home one day to find her parents had been sent back to Mexico.

"She came home, nobody was home. After she knew that her parents weren't home, she finally found out that they got deported, so she had to go with them," she told KCBS' Dave Padilla.

"I don't think that's really fair. Her parents, they just came here for a better life. Some people don't got nothing in Mexico. Or any other place. So this was their only hope and I just don't think it's fair."

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents targeted mostly undocumented Latinos. Sweeps in Richmond and Concord resulted in over 200 arrests. Of those, 94 were undocumented immigrants.

Following the raids, many schools in the area with a large Latino student population experienced drops in attendance.

(RdD)

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## Effects of raid still felt in Iowa town

Updated 2/12/2007 7:56 AM ET

By Judy Keen, USA TODAY

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa — When José Mora tucks his 7-year-old niece into bed at night, she often asks, "Where's my mommy?"

He doesn't want to say that her mother is in a Des Moines jail awaiting a hearing that could result in her being deported to Mexico.

"I say only, 'Your mother might be coming home next month,' " says Mora, who won't discuss the child's legal status.

Mora, 41, who has three children, took in his two nieces before Christmas. Their father, Mora's brother-in-law, was deported to Mexico after a Dec. 12 raid at a local meatpacking plant. Federal agents raided Swift & Co. plants here and in five other states and arrested more than 1,200 illegal immigrants as part of a probe into stolen and fake IDs that such immigrants allegedly have used to get jobs in the USA.

Exactly two months after the raid, the effects in this town are still apparent. Families are fractured, some illegal immigrants have left town or gone underground, and there's renewed debate about immigration laws. Police and some longtime residents say it's about time there was a crackdown. Others say they feel new empathy.

### Immigrants fearful

For Mora, the raid was the beginning of upheaval in his family: His nieces' mother was detained a week later. "I don't have a problem having the girls because I love them," he says. "My question is only: Why do that? Why take parents away from their children?"

The legal status of about 6,000 Hispanics in this city of 27,000 is often a mystery even to their friends: Police don't ask for proof of citizenship, and schools require only students' birth certificates and don't check parents' documents.

"There's probably more fear in the immigrant community" since the raid, says Mayor Gene Beach. A community summit will be held Feb. 26 to discuss ways to change immigration laws so "people who want to work and contribute to the community" can stay legally. "We really are dealing now with what can we do to make changes in the policies in Washington," he says.

Two weeks before Christmas, agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrived at the Swift

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plant here at 7 a.m. They also raided plants in Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, Utah and Minnesota. A total of 1,297 people were arrested, says ICE spokeswoman Jamie Zuieback. Of those, 274 — including 30 from Marshalltown — face criminal charges, she says.

Tom Vilsack, then Iowa's governor, said in a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff that the raid "created undue hardship ... and led to resentment and further mistrust of government."

Zuieback says agents took "unprecedented steps" to ensure that the raids were "orderly, humane and respectful of the rights and needs of all involved parties." They set up a toll-free number so people could find out where those who were arrested were being held and allowed 120 people with children or other dependents to go home — though many still face charges.

Word spread quickly on that rainy day that the first immigration raid here in a decade had begun. People rushed to the plant and to schools to pick up their children.

"People were in an absolute panic," says Woodbury Elementary School Principal Tom Renze. "I got many calls that day just wanting assurances that the enforcement agents were not coming to school." In the next few days, Renze and his staff went to immigrants' homes to tell them it was safe to send their children to school. Some parents wouldn't answer their doors.

Things are calmer now at Woodbury, where 78% of the 300 students are Hispanic, but 20 students have left since the raid, Renze says. "We know that some of our children are without their parents."

Christine Feagan, a nun who runs the Hispanic ministry at St. Mary's Catholic Church, has a list of 92 people who were deported or detained, and she suspects there are more. "Everybody was affected in some way," she says. "Spouses are separated, women who were left here don't speak English, don't drive." Her group has received \$85,000 in donations to help the families pay bills and legal fees.

Some Hispanic immigrants have been in Marshalltown for more than a decade, but the Latino and Anglo communities don't mingle socially.

Still, most residents are accepting, says Ken Anderson, the Chamber of Commerce president. There's a Hispanic festival every summer, and the YMCA is a gathering place for both communities. After the raid, city leaders met to discuss ways to help those affected.

"It's a real subtle maturing process that we're going through," Anderson says. "Hispanics are buying homes, filling up Main Street with their businesses. We're working to build one community."

The first immigrants to arrive here were young men drawn to jobs at the meatpacking plant, says Police Chief Lon Walker. Families followed, but he says some residents blame immigrants for drug-dealing and violent crimes. Since 1999, he says, the city has had no dramatic increases in crime.

Walker says cases involving illegal immigrants who use stolen identities are the most "time-consuming, complex and frustrating." His officers recently found a Swift worker with stolen IDs that had been used by people in four states. Last Easter, an illegal immigrant was killed in a hit-and-run accident. "We're still not 100% sure who got buried," he says.

#### **Locals have mixed feelings**

After the raid, he says, "I got call after call from people saying: 'About time. Good job.'"

Deb Williams, 46, a tax preparer, says many people in town have no sympathy for illegals. "The people that were mad before are kind of glad they got busted," she says.

Robin Blue, who works at a telemarketing company, says the raid was "the right thing to do. If you're going to come here, work here and live here, you need to learn the language."

Aimmie Carter, 21, Blue's co-worker, says, "A lot of people in my family hate Mexicans." Even so, she thinks some now feel sorry for families affected by the raid. "I don't like the way they did it at all."

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Printed from THE DAILY JOURNAL, dtd. 02/14/2007

## ICE raids dubbed harmful

By Michelle Durand

Recent immigration sweeps are frightening the abused from seeking help and tearing at the community relationships that help law enforcement cull information about drug activity and other crime, domestic violence advocates told the Board of Supervisors yesterday.

The efforts by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement are counterproductive because the sweeps keep battered people, particularly women, from coming forward about their abusive situation, said prosecutor Elizabeth Hill who sits on the board of CORA, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse.

The sentiment was echoed by other CORA members who asked the board to pass a resolution condemning the sweeps and take a pro-active role in asking local law enforcement not to cooperate.

"It shouldn't be the work of the police to cooperate with the immigration service," Rhina Ramos, CORA's Latina outreach coordinator, said.

Board President Rose Jacobs Gibson assured the group the issue "is not something that's being left uncared for" and she is working with U.S. Rep. Ann Eshoo, D-Atherton.

The sweeps focused on North Fair Oaks, Jacobs Gibson's district, and are "really causing a lot of stir in the community."

Nearly two weeks ago, ICE agents reportedly swooped into Redwood City in search of illegal immigrants. Parents reported federal agents checking identification near Hoover Elementary School while others said day laborers on El Camino Real were stopped. Although the effort focused on those with outstanding warrants or deportation orders, other illegal immigrants were also picked up.

One person taken was a a Latina outreach promoter for CORA, Ramos said.

The woman is still in detention while her two children are cared for by a friend — a point CORA attorney Debbie Appel said raises questions about how sweeps tear families apart and stretch an already overburdened foster care system.

The raids undo years of work and won't eradicate crime or drug use, Appel said.

"None of these problems will go away because ICE deports some number of illegal immigrants," she said.

Following the raids, community leaders told hundreds of Redwood City residents at the Fair Oaks Community Center that legal status is not a local concern.

The City Council and Police Department maintained that the city wouldn't participate in immigration raids and told residents they don't have to cooperate if asked about their legal status.

Michelle Durand can be reached by e-mail: [michelle@smdailyjournal.com](mailto:michelle@smdailyjournal.com) or by phone: (650) 344-5200 ext. 102. What do you think of this story? Send a letter to the editor: [letters@smdailyjournal.com](mailto:letters@smdailyjournal.com).

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## Immigration Agents Conducting Raids In S.F.

CBS 5 Investigates



Anna Werner  
Reporting

(CBS 5) *SAN FRANCISCO* CBS 5 Investigates has been looking into complaints about federal Immigration raids in the East Bay. Now CBS 5 has learned they have moved into San Francisco.

Immigrant rights groups maintain even though the city is officially a sanctuary for undocumented immigrants, that isn't stopping immigration from conducting raids here. They contend roughly a half-dozen locations have been subject to raids in the past week or so.

Now Supervisor Gerardo Sandoval is speaking out: "What we are hearing from the community is that they are arresting anybody and everybody who is within an arm's length," he told CBS 5.

So how many raids? "At least 5 different arrests in different parts of the city," according to activist Miguel Perez with the Latin American Alliance for Immigrant Rights.

Word of the raids is swirling through the local Latino community. There are reports of ICE agents picking people up at their jobs, for example, at a refrigerated trucking company in San Francisco where the owner said they took away 8 or 9 people.

"It has happened in San Francisco where the INS has gone out to employers who really are caught between a rock and a hard place and the INS is going out to the workplaces and arresting these people", said Sandoval.

And it's clearly a painful experience for many immigrants like a woman who wanted to be identified only by her first name, Rebecca:

In Spanish, she told CBS 5, "It hurts, (the) children (are) hurting." The children belong to her son, who she says was picked up by ICE agents while working at a construction job. They're her grandchildren, who she said asked her, "where is our father?"

Mayor Gavin Newsom issued a statement Wednesday afternoon saying, "I am very concerned about the recent raids performed in various parts of the city by immigration and customs enforcement."

"These raids jeopardize the public health and safety of the city by instilling fear in those who may come forward to report information about a crime," the mayor said.

An ICE spokeswoman refused to provide specific details regarding where and when those raids were conducted in San Francisco.

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ICE officials arrest undocumented workers during a recent raid.

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Thursday Feb 15

## Eshoo mulls raids

U.S. Rep. writes letter to immigration officials

By Shaun Bishop / Daily News Staff Writer

News of the recent raids by federal immigration agents in Redwood City found its way to Capitol Hill this week when a Bay Area congresswoman took up the issue and sent a letter of concern to a senior immigration official.

U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, wrote the letter after being contacted by San Mateo County leaders who have said they are concerned that the raids will cause Redwood City's sizable Hispanic population to become distrustful of local police.

The letter, dated Tuesday, was addressed to Nancy Alcantar, field office director for detention and removal operations at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in San Francisco.

"I know that local law enforcement officers are dedicating considerable time and resources to building trust in the community," Eshoo wrote. "Their efforts are undermined by the confusion and fear among immigrants (in terms of distinguishing) between local law enforcement and federal officials."

ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley confirmed that Alcantar had received the letter and said representatives from the office have contacted Eshoo's office in response. Neither Haley nor Eshoo's office would discuss the response.

The letter comes a week after city and county officials - including the city's mayor and police chief - issued a call to the community to remain calm and continue to report crimes to police without fear of being questioned about their immigration status.

Representatives of the federal immigration agency say the raids are targeted at specific individuals with outstanding felony warrants or deportation orders, but that other illegal immigrants can also be picked up in the process.

Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse, a local organization that helps domestic violence victims, said this week it was concerned that illegal immigrants would stop reporting incidents of domestic violence out of fear that they might be deported.

Eshoo wrote that immigration agents who identify themselves as police officers present a problem for local law enforcement.

At least seven people have been arrested by ICE agents in recent weeks in the Redwood City area, according to the International Institute of San Francisco.

E-mail Shaun Bishop at [sbishop@dailynewsgroup.com](mailto:sbishop@dailynewsgroup.com).

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## Eshoo responds to immigrants' arrests

### 1,077 undocumented individuals detained in Bay Area

By Kelly Pakula, STAFF WRITER  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:02/15/2007 02:39:26 AM PST

REDWOOD CITY — Just two weeks after U.S. Immigration and Customs agents swept through San Mateo County, arresting at least seven illegal immigrants in Redwood City, U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, has sent a letter to ICE questioning their practices.

So far, "Operation Return to Sender," launched in June, has led to 13,000 arrests nationwide, according to Lori Haley of ICE. Last year, immigration officials detained 1,077 undocumented immigrants in the Bay Area and an additional 838 people so far this year.

As a result of these sweeps, local residents have voiced their concerns regarding the arrests to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, which in turn contacted Eshoo.

Eshoo subsequently sent a letter Tuesday to Nancy Alcantar, a San Francisco-based field office director for ICE's Detention and Removal Operations, asking that ICE take into consideration her concerns regarding the arrests.

"First, local law enforcement was not informed of the operation. The use of the word 'police' by ICE officers when making arrests is problematic for them. I know that local law enforcement officers are dedicating considerable time and resources to building trust in the community," Eshoo wrote in the letter. "Their efforts are undermined by the confusion and fear among immigrants between local law enforcement and federal officials."

Haley said she has not personally spoken with any county representatives regarding the arrests but said she welcomes any comments they may have concerning ICE's operations.

"A lot of people say things to the media and they say things at these rallies and that's it," she said. "Certainly if anyone has enforcement concerns, they can contact us."

Staff writer Kelly Pakula can be reached at (650)348-4339.

or by e-mail at [kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com).

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## Officials balk at criticizing sweeps

### Advocates urge strong reply to federal action

By Michael Manekin and Kelly Pakula, STAFF WRITERS  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:02/16/2007 09:10:21 AM PST

REDWOOD CITY — Two weeks after federal immigration officials swept through San Mateo County, arresting at least seven illegal immigrants in Redwood City, local officials have scrambled to pacify the Latino community with sympathetic ears and impassioned assurances.

However, neither Redwood City nor the county has taken steps toward what immigration advocates believe to be the strongest possible statement against federal immigration raids: A resolution condemning the arrest of illegal immigrants.

Such a resolution, says Sheryl Bergman of the International Institute of San Francisco, a Bay Area immigration rights group with an office in Redwood City, would make great strides in easing the fear that currently exists in the Latino community.

"It would help make parents safer when they take their children to school, when they go to the grocery store to buy milk and when they go to their jobs," said Bergman.

Since the Immigration and Customs Enforcement roundups of two weeks ago, a small chorus of immigration advocates have begun to pressure local officials to take a public stand against what they believe to be a punitive reflection of a national immigration policy, which is clearly broken.

Rhina Ramos, Latina outreach coordinator of Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse, addressed the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors this week on behalf of such a resolution.

"San Mateo will not stand for this type of thing," said Ramos. "That will send a strong message to the people that they matter as residents in this local community. That sends a message that we're backing them up."

The recent ICE operations — which Bergman claims also picked up two people outside Redwood City, one in East Palo Alto and another in Burlingame — are part of a national campaign dubbed Operation Return to Sender. Launched in June, the operation has led to some 13,000 arrests nationwide.

Although the sweeps are designed to target illegal immigrants with outstanding deportation orders or criminal records, federal officials often pick up immigrants with clean records, a fact which has helped spark local immigration advocates to persuade local government to pass an anti-ICE resolution.

This kind of resolution wouldn't be a first for the Bay Area. In response to an ICE operation that netted 119 arrests in Concord and Richmond, the Richmond City Council passed an edict against the sweeps last week. Meanwhile, in San Francisco, Supervisor Chris Daly submitted a resolution Wednesday that is scheduled to be heard at the end of the month.

ICE spokeswoman Virginia Kice declined to comment specifically on whether a local resolution against ICE would affect its operations, but Larisa Casillas, director of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition, said that such resolutions "show federal officials that this is really impacting local communities," sending a clear message that there are communities "where ICE can't just do what they want to do."

Nonetheless, both San Mateo County and Redwood City have so far resisted taking a firm stance against federal immigration officials.

"The fact that they're a federal agency, it causes me to pause very thoughtfully about what we can do ... given the fact that we don't have authority over them," said Rose Jacobs Gibson, the president of the county Board of Supervisors.

In an effort to bridge the divide, Gibson recently contacted U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, who sent a letter Tuesday to Nancy Alcantar, a field office director for ICE's Detention and Removal Operations. In the letter, Eshoo expressed concern that the federal sweeps have instilled fear in the community and have the potential to fray local law enforcement's ties to its residents, but stops short of an outright condemnation.

Redwood City Mayor Barbara Pierce, who participated with the city's police chief last week in a community meeting, which attempted to assure the Latino community that local law enforcement does not generally work with ICE, discarded the idea of an anti-ICE resolution on the grounds that it would not represent the view of the entire community.

On the one hand, said Pierce, the city wants to show support to its illegal residents, but on the other hand, "you also have people who have lived here perhaps a long time ... who might have other opinions about what should be done."

On Saturday, for example, the Minutemen, a group of volunteers who strongly oppose illegal immigration, have scheduled an anti-illegal immigration rally in the city (see related story).

The city's primary concern, said Pierce, is that the immigration roundups not discourage the Latino community from working with the police — a prospect that local law enforcement and immigration advocates both fear.

Meanwhile, some immigration advocates question the local law enforcement's independence of ICE, citing the federal agency's routine visits to the county jail in Redwood City. ICE visits the county jail two to three times a week, arresting seven to 10 illegal immigrants each trip, according to San Mateo County Sheriff's Capt. Trisha Sanchez.

"We don't stand in the way of ICE," said Pierce. "We let them do their job, and we feel it's important to do our job."

Until the city takes a stronger stance, local immigration advocates continue to lobby for clear communication from the city to its immigrant residents.

"I think that the community in general would benefit from greater clarification regarding what mechanisms are currently in place between the Sheriff's Office, the county jail and ICE," said Bergman.

Meanwhile, city officials said, the city will continue to inform the immigrant community of their constitutional rights and attempt to explain that local police and ICE perform different jobs.

Communication, said Councilwoman Alicia Aguirre, is "an effective response" to a situation outside of local hands.

Said Pierce: "Unless my community tells me to do something differently, then we're going to deal with what's in our purview."

Staff writer Michael Manekin can be reached at (650) 348-4331 or [mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com).

Staff writer Kelly Pakula can be reached at (650) 348-4339 or [kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:kpakula@sanmateocountytimes.com).

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## SAN FRANCISCO

### Immigrant advocates blast raids, crackdown

### City officials stand by pledge to give sanctuary to illegals

Tyche Hendricks, Chronicle Staff Writer

Thursday, February 22, 2007



Bay Area immigrant-rights groups denounced the arrests of illegal immigrants in the region and called for immigration reforms Wednesday, while San Francisco officials reiterated the city's long-standing pledge to give sanctuary to immigrants.

Leaders of the groups, assembled at a news conference at 16th and Mission streets in San Francisco, called for an end to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency's crackdown, which has resulted in the arrests of 13,000 people nationwide in the past nine months, including several hundred in the Bay Area, for immigration violations.

The agency also conducts workplace raids aimed at finding undocumented workers and penalizing their employers.

"There should be no enforcement of immigration law until we reform our immigration law, because right now there's no way for people to become legal residents," said Renee Saucedo, director of the city's Day Labor Program.

San Francisco Supervisor Chris Daly told the crowd of about 50 people, that San Francisco is a "city of sanctuary," where immigrants are welcome and safe, regardless of legal status. Under the 1989 City of Refuge law, meant to protect Central American war refugees, no city employee shall use city resources "to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration law" unless required by law.

Mayor Gavin Newsom also expressed concern last week about immigration raids in the city, saying, "These raids jeopardize the public health and safety of the city by instilling fear in those who may come forward to report information about a crime or those who are in need of medical treatment."

Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokeswoman Lori Haley said the agency's efforts, including those in San Francisco, are continuing but that the city has not been specifically targeted.

"Operation Return to Sender" tracks criminal immigrants and those who have ignored deportation orders, she said, although 80 percent of arrestees in a recent push in Contra Costa County were not targeted fugitives but undocumented immigrants whom agents encountered during the raids.

The agency also does workplace enforcement, said Haley, including a raid in the past month where nine people were arrested at Dean's Services, a warehouse off Third Street in San Francisco.

"These investigations are based on leads," said Haley. "Where possible, we prefer to bring criminal charges against those responsible for hiring."

Concerned that federal raids are causing illegal immigrants who are crime victims to avoid contacting local police, the San Francisco Police Department said last week that it does not enforce immigration law. The district attorney's office is hosting an "immigrant resource fair" Saturday to encourage crime victims to come forward, regardless of immigration status.

The San Francisco Sheriff's Department does not allow federal agents to peruse its booking records or walk through the jail looking for illegal immigrants, spokeswoman Eileen Hirst said. But the sheriff will notify immigration authorities if detainees identify themselves as undocumented, if they have previously been deported or if federal agents are seeking them, she said.

A Bay Area activist for stricter limits on immigration said the Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids are necessary because immigrants place a burden on social services and the environment.

"We should enforce our immigration laws," said Yeh Ling-Ling, director of the Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America in Oakland. "We should apply employer sanctions, which was part of the law that passed 20 years ago."

At Wednesday's news conference, Ana Pérez, director of the Central American Resource Center, said the sanctuary law is important now not for political but economic refugees. "It's no longer about political persecution but trade deals that put out of work 1.5 million peasants in Mexico," she said.

The stepped-up immigration enforcement has political origins, said John Trasviña, president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, with President Bush trying to win support from Republicans for a bill that would extend legal status to some of the nation's estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants.

Some activists are taking their call for legal status directly to Washington. Several groups plan lobbying days next month, including the National Council of La Raza, the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform and Voluntarios de la Comunidad, a San Jose immigrant rights group, which will visit members of Congress in March.

*E-mail Tyche Hendricks at [thendricks@sfchronicle.com](mailto:thendricks@sfchronicle.com).*

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This article appeared on page B - 1 of the San Francisco Chronicle

## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Posted on Thu, Feb. 22, 2007

### City addresses ice raids: Actions tied to police spark Latinos' fears

By Karl Fischer  
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Socorro Cardenas came to the San Pablo City Council with questions about her rights.

"Approximately one month ago, when I came back from the store, a San Pablo police officer stopped me and asked me if I was a legal resident," Cardenas said. "I do not have a driver's license. I realize I broke the law, I should not have been driving."

The officer asked her for her keys -- he had to tow the car, and she understood why. But then he asked what her other keys were for, she said.

Must she answer?

"I am here because I don't feel I needed to give an explanation for the keys," Cardenas told the council before a crowd of about 70 on Tuesday night. "And I don't know if I need to give a response about my legal status or not."

The officer just wanted the trunk key to fetch her groceries, San Pablo police Cmdr. Mark Foisie said. But in a city heavily populated by Latino immigrants, fear caused by recent federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement actions continued to percolate at Tuesday's meeting.

"The tactics they are using I totally resent. I think we should take a stand on the council," Councilwoman Genoveva Garcia Calloway said. "They are coming into our city and terrorizing our residents. ICE comes in and destroys all the work we are doing."

ICE's "Operation: Return to Sender" led to 119 arrests of undocumented Contra Costa residents, 20 of whom the agency actually sought as part of the operation, a spokeswoman reported. The goal of the nationwide operation was to arrest deportation absconders and hard-core criminals.

But the agency terrified local Latino neighborhoods in the process, many speakers told the council. Rumors that police in San Pablo and Richmond participated in ICE actions also eroded relations with local law enforcement, Garcia Calloway said.

Victor Mendoza told the council he recently answered a 5 a.m. knock on his door because someone called "San Pablo police" and said they were looking for a criminal suspect.

"When they came in, they said, 'You know what, we're not San Pablo police. We're Immigration,'" Mendoza said.

Speakers described students crying in class over deported parents and families fearing to go outside. They asked the council to consider a resolution similar to one passed this month by the Richmond City Council, telling city police not to participate in ICE actions.

While procedure forbade the council from acting Tuesday, some members indicated such a resolution would be a tough sell.

"The stories we've heard here tonight and in the newspaper sound heartbreaking, but I've heard no names, I've not heard about any officers being reported" for working with ICE, Mayor Paul Morris said. "It makes me wonder if some of the stories aren't made up."

"I'm not saying they were made up," he added. "I'm just saying they could have been."

Vice Mayor Sharon Brown similarly referred to some testimonials given at previous community meetings by immigrants

and their supporters as "outrageous lies and fabrications." She viewed recent media attention and the organizing efforts of Latino leaders to bring residents to Tuesday's hearing as "pressure" on the council to commit to unfavorable policy.

"I do not 'pressure' well. That's not how we do democracy," Brown said. "I believe the police department has a little saying: 'If you do the crime, you pay the time.' We should not have to support you if you commit a crime."

Squarely at the center of this conflict sat Police Chief Joe Aita, who told the crowd that his department "is not in the immigration business" and respects, values and wants to help all San Pablo residents, documented or otherwise.

"All I can tell you is that the San Pablo Police Department works every single day, as hard as it can, to safeguard the lives of everyone here in San Pablo," Aita told the crowd. "If there's anything the San Pablo Police Department can do for you, any time, my door is open."

Police already have a two-page policy about working with ICE, stating that city police only work with ICE agents in cases when laws other than federal statutes were broken, or when specifically requested to assist an ICE operation with traffic control or similar "keep-the-peace" tasks.

Local police do not participate in immigration sweeps or raids, Aita said. Nor do they ask about a person's immigration status. If an officer does, Morris suggested getting the officer's name and reporting it to the department.

Some in the audience, including former Police Chief Walter Pedretti, cautioned the council not to adopt any new law that hampers the department's ability to conduct criminal investigations.

The council voted to form a committee to draft a resolution dealing with immigration issues for later consideration by the full council. Brown, the lone dissenting vote to form the committee, volunteered to sit on it, and Morris quickly appointed her. Garcia Calloway also will work on the committee.

Reach Karl Fischer at 510-262-2728 or [kfischer@cctimes.com](mailto:kfischer@cctimes.com).

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## Coalition wants county declared sanctuary for illegal immigrants

Group to lobby Redwood City Council, county Board of Supervisors

By Michael Manekin, STAFF WRITER  
Inside Bay Area

Article Last Updated:02/23/2007 02:44:57 AM PST

REDWOOD CITY — Nearly three weeks after a round of federal immigration raids that have unnerved Redwood City's large Latino community, a dozen immigration advocacy groups have banded together to form a coalition whose aim is to convert Redwood City and San Mateo County into a safe haven for illegal immigrants.

"Our vision would be for Redwood City and San Mateo County to be a community that's safe for all of its residents," said Sheryl Bergman of the International Institute of San Francisco, whose Redwood City office assists the local Latino community. "We want public assurance from our local leadership that parents will be safe when they walk their children to school."

To combat the fear and paranoia, the newly formed Redwood City Immigrant Rights Coalition — which includes the International Institute, El Concilio of San Mateo County and a variety of nonprofits, many already working with the local Latino community — is recommending that local government intervene.

To that end, the coalition is drafting a resolution that it will pass to the Redwood City Council and the County Board of Supervisors. The hope, said Bergman, is that local officials will ultimately sign a measure denouncing the recent sweeps by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement — and declare the county and the city "sanctuaries" for illegal immigrants.

Since the raids, Bergman said, Redwood City is still living in fear. Rather than walk their children to school, many parents have asked U.S. citizens to do the job for them. Meanwhile, a small underground economy has formed on the back of illegal immigrants too fearful to go to market: Both citizens, and the fearless among the immigrants, have taken to shopping for milk and rice and charging for their services.

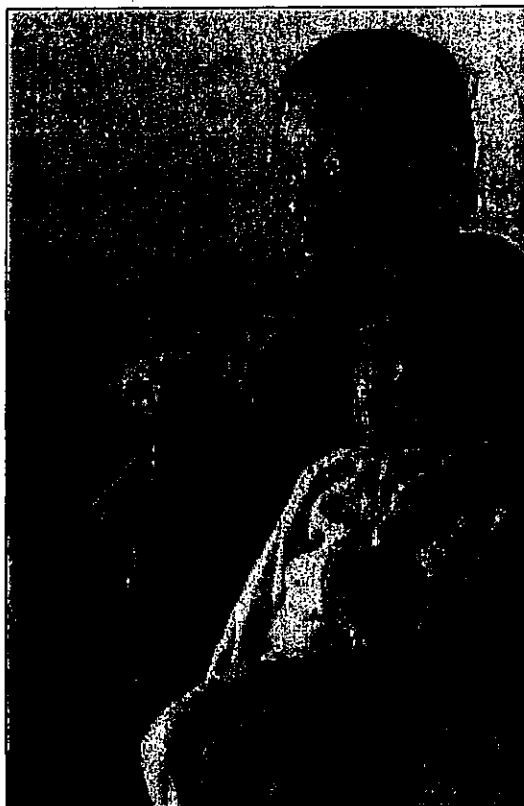
In the Bay Area, the Richmond City Council passed a resolution condemning the ICE sweeps, and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors will consider a similar resolution at the end of the month. Although ICE spokeswoman Virginia Kice declined to say whether local officials' condemnation would affect federal anti-illegal-immigrant operations, the Redwood City Immigrant Rights Coalition believes that a local condemnation would make an important symbolic stance against "a broken national immigration system" and comfort a shaken community.

Members of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and the Redwood City Council did not return calls for comment by press time Wednesday.

The coalition also intends to step up legal education for illegal immigrants — holding workshops and training sessions on constitutional rights for residents living here illegally — and pool resources to assist families affected by the arrest of illegal immigrants affected by future ICE operations.

The recent ICE sweeps are part of the federal agency's Operation Return to Sender, a stepped-up campaign to arrest illegal immigrants with arrest or deportation records. Since June, the operation has arrested more than 13,000 residents, many without any prior charges to their name, said Kice.

Staff writer Michael Manekin can be reached at (650) 348-4331 or by e-mail at [mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com](mailto:mmanekin@sanmateocountytimes.com).



John Walker / The Fresno Bee  
Mendota resident Felician, holding a 10-month-old daughter and with her 2-year-old, Iris, at her side, cries Thursday as she talks about a raid in which her husband, an undocumented field worker, was picked up by immigration agents.

↓ More photos

## Roundup of illegals shakes up Mendota

**Federal action splits families, empties streets; city to consider resolution opposing the raids.**

By Vanessa Colón / The Fresno Bee  
02/27/07 03:36:27

Three weeks after immigration agents swept through town, arresting scores of undocumented immigrants, Mendota officials are considering whether to take a political stance against the nationwide raids.

Although some Mendota officials fear such a stand could jeopardize federal funding of the city's half-built prison and other projects, others say the sweep has devastated the small farming community.

Mendota has been like a ghost town since the sweep, officials said. Residents are afraid to leave their homes to shop or walk their children to school.

"A lot of people are very uncomfortable, especially here in Mendota, where there's a lot of farmworkers. ... Some children have been left behind" when parents were arrested, Mayor Robert Silva said.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement operation is part of a national effort to reduce illegal

immigration.

"ICE does not enact the laws. ICE officers are sworn to enforce the laws," said Lori Haley, a spokeswoman from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Haley said "Operation Return to Sender" targets people with deportation orders issued by a judge, but if agents come in contact with other undocumented immigrants, they also can be deported.

It's unclear how many residents have been arrested -- federal officials declined to provide an exact number. But one Mendota City Council member estimated about 200 people were picked up the week of Feb. 8.

Across the nation, from the San Diego suburb of Escondido to Hazelton, Pa., local governments have tried to crack down on illegal immigrants, penalizing people who rent or provide jobs to undocumented immigrants.

But in Mendota, whose farming economy depends on immigrant labor, undocumented immigrants are a vital part of the community, not a nuisance, city officials say. They work the fields, pay rent and shop in the community's stores.

Silva said the City Council may consider a resolution similar to one San Francisco adopted that condemns the immigration sweeps.

Some Mendota residents want their city to take a stand, Silva said.

City Manager Gabriel Gonzalez said the staff needs to research the legal implications before the City Council can vote on it. Council Member Joseph Riofrio said he expects the resolution to be on the agenda March 13.

Riofrio, who requested the sweeps resolution, also wants the city to declare itself a safe haven for undocumented immigrants. He believes Mendota could be the first city in the Valley to adopt such a resolution. San Francisco has issued a similar declaration.

But he said some council members worry the federal government could make it difficult for the city to obtain money for future projects if a resolution passed. Some Mendota council members declined to comment on any city immigration resolution until they see what is proposed.

Haley said resolutions condemning immigration sweeps won't affect the agency's efforts, however.

Rick Oltman, a spokesman for Californians for Population Stabilization, calls the resolution "bad policy." The nonprofit group in Santa Barbara supports greater enforcement to curb illegal immigration.

"It's unfortunate when elected officials don't support legitimate law enforcement operations. These people have a responsibility. They are spending tax dollars," Oltman said.

Mendota businesses such as Westside Grocery and the Mendota Food Center noticed fewer customers since the sweep. Riofrio said customers are only now starting to return.

"The whole street was desolate. There was no one around," said Riofrio, whose family owns Westside Grocery.

He said the raids just add to the misery already caused by the citrus freeze and last year's shutdown of local manufacturers, such as the De Francesco Sons plant in Firebaugh and Rock-

Tenn, the Kerman box-folding plant.

Riofrio said the majority of the people immigration agents are arresting are hardworking people.

"I felt they violated the city. They separated families. ... When the kids see dad and mom being pulled away, it's traumatizing," Riofrio said.

Alicia Chavez of Mendota was left to care for a friend's four children, ages 9 months and 5, 7 and 12 years old.

The children belong to her boyfriend's sister, who was deported three weeks ago. She said the children ask for their mother.

"The 9-month-old cries a lot. He doesn't want to sleep," Chavez said.

Chavez said immigration agents pounded on the door around 5:30 a.m. Once inside, they asked several people, including Chavez, if they were legal residents. Chavez, a U.S. citizen, said the agents arrested seven adults and a 10-year-old girl at the home.

"I think it's unfair. They came looking for someone else," she said.

One Mendota family was left without a father, who was the breadwinner. Feliciano, who declined to give her last name for fear of being deported, said she doesn't know what she is going to do. She takes care of her three daughters, including a 10-month-old with poorly developed lungs who needs frequent medical care.

"I have to ask for help in paying the rent. I feel if I go to Mexico, my daughter will die," Feliciano said in Spanish.

Her husband was arrested by agents in Mendota when he drove by a store to pick up two coworkers around 5 a.m., she said. They were planning to go to work pruning almond trees near Five Points.

She said her husband, calling from a Santa Clara detention center, said about three busloads of workers were picked up in Mendota.

Manuel Cunha Jr., president of the Nisei Farmers League in Fresno, said agents have not raided farms, but he is worried about the ongoing sweeps and the effect on agriculture's labor force.

"We don't need a lot of disruptions right now," he said.

Staff writers Dennis Pollock and Chris Collins contributed to this report. The reporter can be reached at [vcolon@fresnobee.com](mailto:vcolon@fresnobee.com) or (559) 441-6313.



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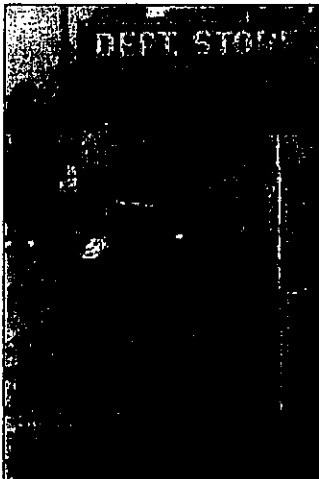


John Walker / The Fresno Bee  
Mendota City Council Council Member Joseph Riofrio, in his Westside Grocery, says the Fresno County city will consider a resolution opposing the federal immigration sweeps.

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John Walker / The Fresno Bee

A photo hangs in the Mendota apartment of a family affected by the roundup. Businesses have felt the sting of the raids, as people have hesitated to leave their homes.



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John Walker / The Fresno Bee

City officials say the streets of Mendota were largely empty following the roundup of undocumented workers by federal officials in early February.

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## Congress marks opening day on immigration policy

By Jerry Kammer  
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

3:47 p.m. February 27, 2007

WASHINGTON – Congress and the White House are set to begin another rancorous season of immigration debate this week as two Bush administration officials travel to Capitol Hill to make the president's case for legalizing millions of illegal immigrants and welcoming potentially millions of temporary workers in the future.

Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff and Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez are scheduled to appear Wednesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee, the starting point for the sweeping immigration reform bill that passed the Senate last year before slamming against a wall of angry Republican opposition in the House.

"It's opening day" for immigration reform, said Frank Sharry, a leader of the left-right coalition that unites liberal Hispanic rights groups, labor unions and church organizations with an array of business interests clamoring for wider access to low-wage workers.

The always-volatile politics of immigration policy took a big turn in last year's elections as Democrats, historically aligned with the liberal groups who seek to expand immigration, took control of both houses of Congress.

Many Democratic candidates won after taunting the "do-nothing Republican Congress" for its failure to manage immigration and its passage of legislation to build a border fence for which funding was not made available.

"That became a laugh line to show how ridiculous Republicans were," said Sharry, executive director of the National Immigration Forum.

But the leader of a Washington think tank that argues for restrictions on immigration says that if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi wants to preserve the newly won Democratic majority, she will need to move cautiously on immigration. While a sweeping legalization measure would appeal to much of the party's base, it could endanger the seats of newly elected Democrats, said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies. He prefers to call legalization "amnesty," a loaded term shunned by immigrant advocates who speak of "earned adjustment."

"A big amnesty would be a big problem for the Democrats who won in swing districts," Krikorian said. "In the next election, challengers would be able to run against the 'left-wing Nancy Pelosi amnesty.'"

Many of those swing districts are in areas of the country where there is widespread alarm at the rapid growth in the nation's population of illegal immigrants – estimated at 12 million and growing at about 500,000 per year.

Mindful of the issue's volatility, Rep. Rahm Emanuel, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, has said he expects the Bush administration to persuade at least 85 Republicans to vote for the sweeping legalization

measure.

"They're going after Republicans because they know they're going to have to give some of their own members a bye when this comes up for a vote," said Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., who is weighing a 2008 presidential bid to showcase his hard-line stance against illegal immigration.

Tancredo said the Bush administration is trumpeting its ramped-up enforcement measures at the border and at job sites in order to win the votes of reluctant members. "They want to tell Congress, 'We've done our job, now you do yours with a guest worker program,'" Tancredo said. "My message is that as soon as you give them a guest worker program, that will be the end of enforcement."

Partisans on both sides of the issue are waiting for President Bush to make a clear statement of his position on one of the most controversial issues before Congress: Should workers who come to the United States on future guest worker visas be put on a path to citizenship or required to return home?

"He has been deliberately ambiguous on that one," said Sharry, pointing to presidential statements over the past several years that have called for Congress to "match willing workers with willing employers," without stating the terms of such an arrangement.

But White House spokesman Scott Stanzel this week that such a program "must be truly temporary, so participation should be for a limited period of time and guest workers would have to return home" after a period set by Congress.

Tamar Jacoby, an immigration advocate and scholar at the conservative Manhattan Institute, said Congress must move on immigration reform before the fall, when the 2008 presidential election politics make leaders of both parties reluctant to move on such a controversial issue.

"I would say that it's a universal belief that if it doesn't happen by August, we're cooked," Jacoby said.

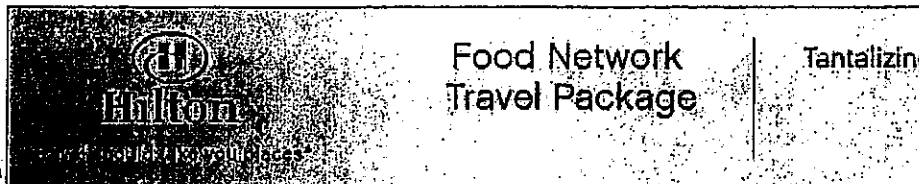
If a comprehensive measure fails, immigrant advocates might then look to less ambitious reforms, such as the so-called Agjobs bill that would provide a path to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of farm workers and their families, or the Dream Act, to provide a path to citizenship for persons who came illegally to the United States at an early age, many of them brought by their parents.

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## White House pushes immigration overhaul

Chertoff leads the charge on Capitol Hill for enough votes to pass a comprehensive plan

By Nicole Gaouette

Times Staff Writer

February 28, 2007

WASHINGTON — For weeks, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has waged a clandestine charm offensive on behalf of an immigration overhaul. He consulted with supportive lawmakers, listened to adversarial congressmen and slipped into the private offices of wary senators, the only sign of his presence the beefy security men waiting outside.

Last week, Chertoff took skeptical members of Congress on a helicopter tour of the southern U.S. border to promote the administration's stepped-up enforcement measures.

They gave chase to illegal immigrants, and at one stop the lawmakers picked up a welder and — with a spray of sparks — helped build the solid-steel barrier rising along parts of the border with Mexico.

Today, Chertoff launches a higher-profile effort to win enough votes to pass a comprehensive overhaul when he testifies at the first Capitol Hill hearing on immigration legislation since Democrats took over.

Chertoff's campaign has impressed some lawmakers who may be crucial to the fate of his effort, but it's not clear whether they have been swayed enough to support it.

"It's remarkable how much progress they are making," said Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), a staunch opponent of the administration's immigration policies who visited the border with Chertoff. But the trip "reaffirms to me that what we tried to do last year was right — that is, delineate the need for security and require its completion first."

The campaign comes as the White House is working hard to sell its domestic legislative priorities to Democrats. An immigration overhaul is one area where President Bush's agenda closely matches that of the Democratic leadership.

In addition to confronting stubborn opposition, the administration is contending with a tight schedule and volatile politics. Bush has two years left to cement his legacy, but presidential campaign politics will make complicated legislation difficult to tackle.

"I think we've made a lot of progress on the border, but we need to address all the elements of the problem," Chertoff told reporters Tuesday. "We want to work with Congress. That's the whole

point of being in government — to get stuff done."

Chertoff will testify with Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez, who has accompanied him on Capitol Hill to promote Bush's vision for legislation that would bolster border security and workplace enforcement, create a program to allow for guest workers, and give most of the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants living in the U.S. a path to citizenship.

The House has passed an immigration enforcement bill, but it is unclear how much support there is for broader legislation.

Debate will probably start in the Senate, with Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) expected to introduce a bill next month that resembles the legislation the Senate passed last year, 62 to 36.

To pass, the bill would need the support of at least the 21 Senate Republicans who voted for it last year. It may even need a few more, because some freshman Democrats campaigned against "amnesty" for illegal immigrants.

The administration is upbeat about the prospects and has started to aggressively lobby Republicans who say enforcement must come first.

The White House hopes that if GOP lawmakers see improvements in border security and workplace enforcement, they may be inclined to support a comprehensive overhaul. Raids last week on restaurants across the country, including several in Southern California, contributed to that effort. So did Chertoff's border tour with at least 10 lawmakers.

At one stop, in San Luis, Ariz., Chertoff held a news conference at the new steel fence — part of a 28-mile test section — to promote border security.

Since Bush ordered 6,000 National Guard troops to the border in May, administration officials say they have seen a dramatic drop in the number of arrests, a sign that fewer people are trying to cross.

As of Jan. 31, arrests were down 27% from last year, with the largest drop, 62%, occurring along a part of the Arizona border where the administration has doubled the number of agents to 850, installed fencing and more than 500 ground sensors, and added five helicopters for a fleet of eight.

The Homeland Security Department also has increased the number of detention facilities to hold illegal immigrants arrested at the border.

"This is the kind of tangible indication of progress that the American people have been waiting for," Chertoff said during the border tour.

The message was also directed at the lawmakers, a carefully chosen group that included members of the House and Senate judiciary committees, which oversee and shape immigration legislation, and long-standing foes of a comprehensive overhaul.

Chertoff and Gutierrez visited Isakson to discuss the legislation he recently introduced that would require the administration to certify that border security was complete before any new overhaul measures could begin.

Chertoff briefed Sen. Ben Nelson (D-Neb.) on border security before the Arizona trip. Nelson

opposed the Senate legislation last year, citing concerns that Americans could lose jobs to immigrants.

Chertoff also brought along Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa), the ranking Republican on the immigration subcommittee and an opponent of the administration's immigration policy. Two House Judiciary Committee members on the trip, Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) and Rep. Chris Cannon (R-Utah), support the White House on immigration, and a third, freshman Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), is new to the debate.

"It eased my worries that we weren't having enough enforcement, because inadequate enforcement over the last few years allowed this problem to grow," Nelson said of the Arizona visit, his first to the border. Nelson said he thought more security was needed before other changes were tackled.

King, one of the strongest backers of a 854-mile fence along the border, was unmoved. "This is not what you'd call a real good start, but at least it's a beginning," he said.

King said Chertoff requested a private meeting, but it "just identified how tenacious each of us might be."

"Chertoff is a pretty good listener, but he works for the White House, and they have a different goal," King said. "We have a working relationship and we'll be able to talk about this policy, but my position is that until we stop bleeding at the border we can't have a discussion about the 12 million who are here."

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*nicole.gaouette@latimes.com*

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## Kennedy, McCain try again on immigration Bill would keep fence, but ease way to citizenship

*The Boston Globe*

By Rick Klein, Globe Staff | February 28, 2007

WASHINGTON -- Senators Edward M. Kennedy and John McCain are set to introduce a revised version of their sweeping plan to overhaul the nation's immigration laws, in a bill that's likely to restart a tense debate in Congress.

The measure, which is being drafted in consultation with the White House, will largely mirror the immigration bill that stalled last year, according to lawmakers and aides involved in the process. That measure was blocked primarily because House Republican leaders were adamantly opposed to provisions that would have allowed undocumented immigrants to become US citizens.

Though negotiations are still ongoing, this year's bill will most likely leave in place the 700-mile border fence, the creation of which was signed into law last year. It would also double the size of the US Border Patrol and add new means to crack down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants, a further attempt to assuage concerns about the nation's porous borders.

But the bill is likely to enrage advocates of a get-tough approach to immigration by allowing most of the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants already in this country to earn legalized status. Early drafts of the bill would allow them to become citizens after about 12 years if they meet requirements such as learning English, passing a criminal background check, and paying back taxes and a \$2,000 fine.

"Those who have lived here, who have basically played by the rules, worked hard . . . they, I believe, ought to be able to adjust their status," said Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat. "This is a complex issue and demands a comprehensive approach. I don't expect it to be easy sledding."

The bill, set to be introduced in the House and Senate as soon as next week, will also include a "guest worker" program for immigrants to work in the United States under temporary visas -- an oft-stated goal of President Bush.

The Bush administration is dispatching Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez to testify at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on the issue today -- appearances that will be closely watched for signals from the White House. Chertoff and Gutierrez have also been meeting privately with key lawmakers to discuss the legislation.

A wide range of Democratic and Republican lawmakers have said the White House must assert itself in crafting the bill for it to have any chance of passing Congress this year. McCain, an Arizona Republican, said the Bush administration's involvement is a big boost.

"There's active participation," McCain said. "There's a window of opportunity. I don't know when it becomes impossible, but I know that this is the greatest opportunity -- right now, in the next several months."

After years of stops and starts, the package now being finalized aims to strike a delicate balance. Supporters are emphasizing the added border security measures, hoping to convince skeptical lawmakers that only a broadly written bill that tackles several tough issues can get through Congress.

"Politically it's certainly easier to deal with the other aspects of comprehensive reform if we deal with the border stuff as well," said Representative Jeff Flake, an Arizona Republican who will co-sponsor the House version of the Kennedy-McCain bill.

Congressional leaders have put immigration on a fast track -- tacit acknowledgment that time is short for



legislative action before the 2008 presidential campaign consumes the nation's political energy. Still, several aspects of the bill remain unresolved among the primary sponsors, and several other significant points are almost certain to be altered significantly later in the legislative process.

The bill's sponsors are looking to jettison the three-tiered approach to citizenship included in last year's measure, which allowed undocumented immigrants who have been in the United States the longest to take a far easier path to citizenship than newer arrivals.

That system would have made it all but impossible for anyone with fewer than two years' residence in the country to gain citizenship -- a circumstance that some officials warned would probably have kept the status of a substantial number of immigrants unclear.

The bill's sponsors are still discussing whether to require undocumented immigrants to register at a US port of entry in order to qualify for citizenship. Though some immigrant-rights groups warn that meeting that qualification would be a burden for low-income families, many conservatives insist the so-called "touch back" is legitimate and should be a part of the citizenship process.

"It's a way to avoid the amnesty concerns, and avoid people breaking in line ahead of those who have been waiting outside of the country to enter legally," said Senator John Cornyn, a Texas Republican with ties to the White House.

Though Republicans no longer control the congressional agenda, the Democrats still need their support, and GOP leadership is not on board for a comprehensive reform bill -- a major stumbling block that could slow or stop final passage again this year.

"My view -- which I think reflects a majority of our conference -- is that you can't have a bill that creates a path to citizenship for people who came to the country illegally," said Representative Roy Blunt of Missouri, Republican whip.

But Flake said last fall's election, where several hard-line immigration foes went down in defeat, showed Republicans the importance of an approach to the problem that addresses all the major concerns. "There are a lot of Republicans who just want this issue behind us," he said. ■

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Freedom Socialist • Vol. 28, No. 1 • February-March 2007

## EDITORIALS

### ICE raids a bid to chill immigrant organizing

When Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in SWAT gear stormed into Swift and Company meatpacking plants in six states on Dec. 12, they arrested 1,282 employees and terrorized a workforce of 13,000. Targeting people who look Latino, they claimed they were after criminals involved in identity theft — an inflated and deliberately scary-sounding way to describe using phony or borrowed Social Security numbers to get desperately needed jobs.

In Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, Iowa, and Minnesota, ICE shipped many of those arrested hundreds of miles from their homes. Family members were not told where arrestees were sent and many were abruptly left with no means of support. Some of those who were rounded up were placed in detention, some were deported after being coerced to sign away their rights, and some were released and stranded. Many await deportation hearings.

Protests immediately took place in most of the affected cities and outside ICE headquarters in Chicago. Most of the arrested workers are represented by the United Food and Commercial Workers union, which filed a lawsuit charging that the arrests violate constitutional rights to due process. On Jan. 12, in a federal court in Denver, U.S. District Court Judge John L. Kane gave ICE until Jan. 22 to account for all the Colorado detainees.

**ICE is on a mission — actually, several missions.**

For one thing, it is no accident that these raids took place as Congress is poised to once again take up the question of immigration "reform" after a huge immigrant rights mobilization forced them to table it last year. One of the objects of the brutal actions is to intimidate foreign-born workers back into submission.

A corollary is to create a climate justifying public acceptance and legislative adoption of the "guest worker" program that is a main feature of each of the recent Republican *and* Democratic proposals. For all the hyperbole about the "immigrant threat to our borders," big business depends absolutely on the steady stream of cheap labor from other lands. The goal is not to keep immigrant laborers out, but to make them entirely dependent on the mercy of their bosses to stay in the country.

It's in the interest of the U.S. labor movement to oppose this and to fight instead for decent wages and conditions for *every* worker, no matter their background or color. No more raids, and no more falling for divide and conquer!



# Congress to restart debate on migrant reform

## Lawmakers working out details on measures

**Mike Madden**

Mar. 1, 2007 12:00 AM

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers are close to restarting a debate on immigration reform that lasted more than a year in the past Congress without a resolution.

In the Senate, Democrat Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Arizona Republican John McCain are working out details of a new bill that would let millions of undocumented immigrants get legal status and allow hundreds of thousands of foreign workers to come here legally in the future.

In the House, Republican Jeff Flake of Arizona and Democrat Luis Gutierrez of Illinois are working on a companion bill that lawmakers could take up once the Senate finishes with the issue this spring.

Lobbyists expect the bills to be similar to legislation the Senate passed last year.

Aides say the Senate bill could be introduced next week or the week after, and committee debate could begin by late March. Both chambers aim to take up immigration reform in 2007, before election-year politics start to dominate legislative tactics.

"We came close last year," Kennedy said in a statement prepared Wednesday for a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on immigration reform. The hearing officially kicked off the new focus on the issue.

"Hopefully, we can find common ground in coming weeks," the statement said. "President Bush and the House of Representatives are genuine partners in this debate."

The administration sent two Cabinet members to Capitol Hill on Wednesday to underscore Bush's support for the reform proposal, which passed the Senate last year but stalled after GOP House leaders refused to take it up. Immigration reform represents a chance for Bush to claim a major legislative victory, even though Congress is now controlled by Democrats.

"We must have a solution which is workable, one that will not have us back in this room debating this same issue in 10 years," Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, a Cuban immigrant, told members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

While Democratic leaders in the House and Senate say they support the broad outlines of the reforms the Senate

passed last year, lobbyists don't think legislation can pass without support from at least 20 Republicans in the Senate and 40 in the House.

A coalition of business groups, civil rights organizations and religious leaders support reform legislation, but keeping potential allies together will require delicate negotiation. Lawmakers are trying to come up with a bill that satisfies both Democrats and Republicans before introducing anything.

The chief sponsors of the bills also are taking more time to talk to administration officials about how the Department of Homeland Security would implement sweeping immigration reforms, given that the legislation probably has better prospects for making it through Congress than ever before.

"This time we realize we're not shooting with blanks," Flake said.

That may be true, but opponents of last year's bill plan to try again to defeat it.

"There is an urgent need to secure the border" against drug smugglers and undocumented immigrants seeking jobs in the U.S., said Chris Simcox, president of the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, a Phoenix-based group that patrols the border. "The citizens of this country will not roll over while (members of Congress) cave into the addictions of drug addicts and corporate America."

Reach the reporter at [mmadden@gannett.com](mailto:mmadden@gannett.com).

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Friday Mar 2

## Emotions still run high weeks after immigration raids

By Melissa McRobbie / Daily News Staff Writer

The Peninsula is not alone in its struggle to sort out the emotions unleashed by the federal government's recent immigration raids.

The local raids prompted rallies on street corners, anger on the part of police and city officials and emotional letters to area newspapers. Those reactions have been mirrored in other Bay Area cities where raids took place, as public officials grapple with how to address such a hot topic.

In some cities, the official response was unequivocal, as in Richmond, where a City Council resolution has ordered police not to inform, assist or cooperate with agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which carried out the raids.

Richmond's resolution acknowledges that a quarter of the city's residents were born in other countries and came to the U.S. "in search of better lives for themselves and their families." It calls for a moratorium on such raids until immigration reform is carried out at the federal level.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom released a statement in both English and Spanish condemning the raids in his city last month.

"These raids jeopardize the public health and safety of the city by instilling fear in those who may come forward with information about a crime or those who are in need of medical treatment," he said.

In San Mateo County, Board of Supervisors President Rose Jacobs Gibson wrote in an op-ed to local newspapers last week that she objected to the way in which the raids were conducted; specifically, the fact that the federal agents identified themselves as "police."

Redwood City's new police chief, Louis Cobarruviaz, and city officials have met with community members to emphasize the difference between ICE agents and local police. That police department's official policy, in place since 1995, is "to not stop, detain or arrest an individual solely on the suspicion that he or she is an undocumented alien."

Cobarruviaz wasn't in Redwood City when the policy was put in place; he was working for the San Jose Police Department. But he said similar policies were enacted in cities throughout the state, including San Jose, around that time.

"We felt we needed the cooperation of all residents, legal or illegal, to solve crimes and to protect the community," he said.

Sheryl Bergman of the International Institute of San Francisco, which has an office in Redwood City, said seven people were arrested in that city during the raids last month, along with one person in East Palo Alto and one person in Burlingame. The man arrested in Burlingame was stopped by local police for an unrelated reason but was handed over to federal authorities when it was determined his status was undocumented, Bergman said.

The ICE raids were part of Operation Return to Sender, which targets immigrants in violation of deportation orders or who have outstanding criminal warrants. However, ICE officials said, illegal immigrants who don't fall into those categories can be picked up along the way.

ICE spokeswoman Lori Haley confirmed that about 120 people were arrested in Contra Costa County during the mid-January raids there, and that the vast majority of those arrested were not the people initially targeted -- but she said that is not usually the case, because the agents focus on specific homes where people in the target categories reside.

Addressing local agencies' concerns, she said, "We understand that local law enforcement has a mission that isn't our mission, but we have a job to do." She emphasized that ICE tries to work closely with police departments.

Cobarruviaz said he has not heard from ICE. "They haven't contacted me, nor have I made an effort to contact them. My position is to follow the (city's) policy, and I'm not in any way going to interfere with what the feds do, that's something for the federal government to address," he said.

Those who support the ICE raids have also made themselves visible; affiliate groups of the Minuteman Project have held several rallies in the Bay Area since the raids, including one in Redwood City. That rally on Feb. 17 was publicized as an event in support of two border patrol agents detained over a 2005 incident at the border, but it touched a nerve in the Hispanic community still reeling from arrests in their neighborhoods. An impromptu counter-protest was held across the street that day by those condemning the ICE raids.

Redwood City Mayor Barbara Pierce said she has not seen a backlash from the community regarding the city's skeptical response to the raids. "I think people are much more trying to make sure that I understand that there are different opinions and that it ranges from all different perspectives," she said.

E-mail Melissa McRobbie at [mmcrobbe@dailynewsgroup.com](mailto:mmcrobbe@dailynewsgroup.com).

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## Immigration reform fight not going away

(<http://www.suntimes.com/news/ontiveros/281023,CST-EDT-SUE03.article>)

March 3, 2007

BY SUE ONTIVEROS Sun-Times Columnist

The question probably went through the minds of a few curious onlookers as they rushed past the Federal Plaza at Dearborn and Adams during the noon hour Wednesday:

What would possess those priests and their small crowd to be praying the rosary outdoors on such a blustery day?

For Wednesday was one of those late-winter Chicago days where, at first, the brisk air seemed palatable, but after any length of time in it there was no mistaking that this was an unpleasant, biting cold.

What anyone hurrying by was seeing Wednesday was the first of six multilingual Lenten rosaries of hope. They are being led by members of the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, an organization of more than 130 archdiocesan priests, in conjunction with the Catholic Campaign of Immigration Reform.

Clergy witness on a daily basis more than the angry rhetoric of the immigration debate. They are "troubled" by the suffering of the immigrants, the Rev. Mark Bartosic of St. Frances of Rome in Cicero told those assembled, and want to see comprehensive reform.

Priests see the real people facing fear, pain and suffering because our immigration system is broken and needs repair. They see the families — even those who enter legally — waiting up to eight years to be reunited with loved ones. They watch the U.S.-born children of undocumented parents live in fear that one day Immigration will come knocking and tear their families apart. The tenets of these priests' faith make it impossible for them to stand by and do nothing.

Among them was the Rev. Brendan Curran of St. Pius V in Pilsen. In his predominantly Latino parish, Curran has seen over and over the problems the current immigrant system puts families through. A few months ago he was among those consoling a 10-year-old girl whose mother died from injuries incurred while crossing the border.

Now, I know I'll be hearing from my regular e-mail crowd, who'll chastise me once again that "those people" did wrong so they deserve whatever happens to them. So easy to say when you aren't someone like Curran who watches an innocent child eagerly await a reunion with her beloved mother, only to see her die 20 hours after arrival from gangrene. Easy to say for someone who isn't Curran, who now faces a grieving, motherless child.

After witnessing heart-breaking situations like that, standing and praying while the wind smacks your face is a day at the beach.

So this is why the priests, nuns and others stood outside the Kluczynski Federal Building, the same one that houses the Immigration offices here, hands on rosaries, reciting the prayers.

This praying outdoors on a busy downtown street, where sirens and trucks sometimes drown out their voices, will serve these six Wednesdays of Lent as a reminder that there are people who haven't forgotten the plight of the immigrant. That the problem hasn't gone away; that our leaders in Washington need to get moving on doing something soon.

And the praying will continue in English, Polish, Swahili, Spanish and other languages to remind that the situation isn't one faced by Latinos alone. The one common link between the immigrants in this battle is that they are largely hardworking, family people who only want a better life.

When the rosary concluded, the participants were asked to bring nails from their homes and parishes that will be hammered into the cross that they'll put up each Wednesday, to show their solidarity with the immigrants. It

will be interesting to see, when the six weeks of Lent end, how many nails fill that cross.

It's also fitting that the praying is taking place in this plaza. Next weekend, it is expected to be full of activists, as the first of some 50 events kicks off to put the pressure on Washington to bring about federal immigration reform.

Some people think the whole "immigration thing" has died down. I think it's just beginning.

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## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Posted on Sun, Mar. 04, 2007

### EDITORIAL

## U.S. needs humane immigration policy now

FOR THE PAST two decades, the United States has had what was supposed to be an effective immigration policy. The 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli bill was supposed to curb illegal entry to the country and grant amnesty to 2.7 million illegal immigrants.

However, virtually nothing has been done to enforce the law. The reality that has existed for 20 years, unabated during the Bush and Clinton years, has been de facto open borders.

Not only is there inadequate border protection, but people from Mexico and elsewhere have been lured here, seduced, to take any number of jobs without having to prove legal status.

An estimated 12 million illegal immigrants are living in the United States. Most have been here for many years or even decades. They hold a wide range of jobs, are active in their communities and have married and started families.

Now, after 20 years of inaction in enforcing the law, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) division of the Department of Homeland Security has embarked on a nationwide program to conduct raids and deport undocumented immigrants.

"Operation Return to Sender," as it is called, has split families, deporting parents of children who are U.S. citizens because they were born in this country.

The raids have resulted in needless hardships and understandably have raised fears in many immigrant communities.

Legal as well as illegal immigrants are afraid of being harassed or deported by immigration officials. They also are wary of local police, who they believe are cooperating with ICE raids.

In fact, local police officers work with ICE agents only in cases when laws other than federal statutes were broken, or when specifically requested to assist an ICE operation with traffic control or similar keep-the-peace tasks.

Nevertheless, the raids have made it more difficult for local police officers to win the trust of immigrant communities, thus undermining law enforcement's effectiveness.

ICE officials say they are targeting undocumented immigrants with deportation orders, especially those who have committed crimes.

But the raids appear to be far broader than that, tearing apart families who have been in the United States for many years and have committed no crimes other than ignoring a law they were led to believe was not operational and in fact has not been enforced since its inception.

We are not opposed to enforcing immigration law judiciously -- once we have an effective law in place.

However, it is futile to attempt to undo the past and try to correct 20 years of virtual open borders with random raids. That is hardly the way to correct the larger problem of establishing a national immigration policy that is both humane and effective.

With a majority in Congress and the Bush administration in favor of major immigration reform, there is a good chance that a workable solution can be reached this year.

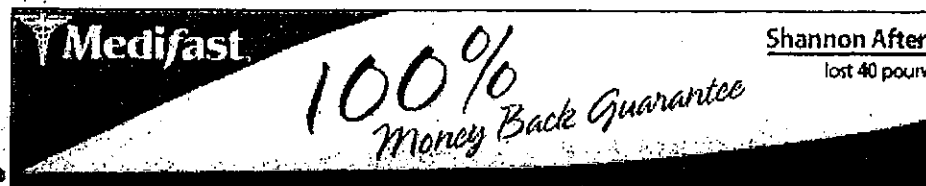
Once a policy is in place that requires a foolproof ID, stiff penalties for employers who flout the law and a large guest-worker program, then strict enforcement would make sense.

Illegal immigrants who have established lives in the United States during the years of de facto open borders should be given the opportunity to become legal guest workers. They also should be allowed to seek citizenship, once they learn English and pass the new citizenship exam.

There is no way the United States is going to deport 12 million people, most of whom have lived in this country for a long time. Nor should we try to through random raids and deporting a small percentage of that number. If that is the goal, "Return to Sender" will be another failed operation.

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## Immigrants advised about their rights

Community groups prepare the undocumented to deal with more law enforcement sweeps.

By Anna Gorman  
Times Staff Writer

March 4, 2007

Following recent arrests at job sites and homes in Southern California and across the nation, local advocates are waging their own campaign to educate immigrants about their rights.

A network of legal aid and nonprofit groups is handing out information packets, holding town hall meetings and producing a DVD to prepare illegal immigrants for future sweeps.

"Our immigration system is out of whack with reality," said Judith Golub, executive director of the San Francisco-based Immigrant Legal Resource Center, which passes out bilingual informational fliers at community meetings. "All these raids are a symptom of a broken system."

The outreach is part of a broader effort by organizations such as the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, American Immigration Lawyers Assn. and other organizations seeking reforms. Some community groups are advising immigrants that if they are stopped by agents, they shouldn't sign or say anything.

"Silence is golden," Central American Resource Center legal director Daniel Sharp told a small gathering of immigrants recently at the Los Angeles office. "Many times, [agents] arrive looking for someone and they take away more people. Why? Because the people get scared and they run, or they get scared and they open their mouths."

Roberto Martinez, who attended the meeting, said he was in boxer shorts when immigration agents banged on his neighbor's door at 6 a.m. one day last fall.

An illegal immigrant from El Salvador, Martinez feared that agents would knock on his door next. He considered running, but worried that the dogs would bark and tip off the agents. So he hid in his apartment and prayed that the agents would leave.

"Oh my God!" Martinez, 28, remembers saying to his roommate. "*Que hacemos?*" — What do we do?"

The agents arrested his neighbor and drove away without knocking on his door, Martinez said, but he is scared they will return.

Sharp told the immigrants that federal agents frequently ask two questions: Where were you born?

And how did you get to this country? Undocumented immigrants must be careful not to answer those questions, he said, because they may be putting themselves at risk of being deported. And they should be careful about what they sign, he added, because they may be agreeing to leave the country voluntarily.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has assigned four teams of agents to the Los Angeles area in recent months to search for criminals, fugitives and visa violators.

They also are stepping up work site enforcement, targeting undocumented workers and their employers.

During one week in January, agents arrested more than 300 illegal immigrants — many of whom had committed crimes or had already been ordered deported — in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties as part of an effort called Operation Return to Sender.

Last month, agents raided eateries nationwide such as the House of Blues and the Hard Rock Cafe, filing criminal charges against three officials of a janitorial contractor and arresting nearly 200 illegal immigrants, including 50 in Southern California.

Officials target specific immigration violators, but may take others into custody if they cannot prove the immigrants are here legally, said Virginia Kice, a spokeswoman for the federal agency.

"If they cannot produce any document or identification, we are going to err on the side of caution," Kice said.

However, she said, nobody is going to be deported without due process.

Angelica Salas, executive director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, said that comprehensive immigration reform, not more raids, is the long-term solution.

"This is the administration's way to show they're doing something about illegal immigration," Salas said. "It's a public relations campaign."

The coalition is producing a short DVD about immigrants' rights to be distributed to them and their advocates nationwide. The DVD is expected to be finished by the end of the month, spokesman Alvaro Huerta said.

The recent sweeps have created confusion, fear and panic in immigrant communities, advocates said.

The Central American Resource Center receives 10 to 20 calls each day from people whose friends or relatives have been detained, executive director Angela Sanbrano said.

"People are afraid to go to the store," Sanbrano said. "They are afraid to go to church. They are even afraid to send their kids to school."

Sanbrano advises her clients to have a plan in case they are arrested and cannot pick up their children from school.

Every time there is word about a raid, Ana Portillo, 38, gets nervous about dropping off her three children at school in the morning. Though they are U.S. citizens, Portillo said, she is

undocumented.

"But we have to go on," said Portillo, who lives in Pomona. "And I know if immigration agents arrest me, I have rights."

Barbara Coe, who heads the California Coalition for Immigration Reform, said she thinks that the community organizations are "aiding and abetting criminal activity" by advising illegal immigrants.

"It is very frightening to know that these people are being welcomed into our communities," Coe said.

About two dozen immigrants gathered at the Central American Resource Center for last week's discussion. Sharp told the immigrants that they should avoid presenting fake documents. And they should never try to flee.

"If you are running, why are you running?" Sharp said. "It attracts their attention."

Manuel Hernandez, who attended the meeting, said he narrowly avoided being arrested by immigration agents last month. Hernandez said he was waiting for work on the street in Huntington Park when he saw a van pull up to the curb and immigration agents get out.

As soon as he noticed the van, he slowly walked away, blending in with a group of people passing by. Hernandez, an undocumented construction worker from El Salvador, said he is always looking over his shoulder for immigration agents.

After the meeting, Hernandez, 37, said he now knows to keep his mouth shut if he is arrested.

"If I start talking," he said, "I am putting the rope around my neck."

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*anna.gorman@latimes.com*

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## The problems of immigration policy — and a call for a fix

By RYAN BRINKS

Panelists for the final session of the National Summit on Immigration Monday in Marshalltown tackled the complex topic of shaping immigration policy. While they provided insights into the problems of current law, changes the system is undergoing and hopes for reform, the real work must be done through encouraging federal lawmakers to fix the system.

"It's very hard, even for people who work in the immigration system, to really see the big picture," said Lori Chesser, a Des Moines immigration attorney and panelist.

The current laws were authored 20 years ago, she said, and its creators underestimated the demographic effects of increased prosperity for the country.

One such inadequacy is the provision of visas only for seasonal jobs in manual labor, she said.

"Most jobs in Iowa are not seasonal. Yes, harvesting crops is seasonal, but pigs are not seasonal, eggs are not seasonal, janitors are not seasonal, meat packing is not seasonal," Chesser said. "So an employer who can't find U.S. workers and wants to bring someone here from abroad has no way to do that on a temporary visa."

One of several factors of the changing world has been the effects of the free market, where cheaper U.S. corn has hurt or wiped out Mexican family farmers, she added.

"The failure of Congress to address these changes to our economy, and to our demographic, and in the world over these last 20 years, has led to a situation where, on balance, most Americans are better off because we don't enforce the law," she said, referencing the billions of dollars in Social Security paid by undocumented workers who will likely never file a return for a refund or claim Social Security.

"I don't think I'm going to get to retire, but I would be in a lot worse shape if that money wasn't being paid in, and that's not right. That's not how we should be running our country," she said. "So I would like to see us get to a point where everyone is better off if we follow the laws."

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The Immigration Rights Network of Iowa and Nebraska's executive director, panelist Carlos Rios, outlined his vision for key parameters involved in changing policies to get to that point.

"Immigration policies leave millions of immigrants in the shadows, [vulnerable] to abuse, starvation and fear because they lack legal documentation," he said. "A comprehensive immigration reform, we would like to propose, must be workable, easily administered, achievable and contain a path to citizenship."

"... We need real solutions that are consistent with American values. We want a solution that rewards hard work, respects rights for immigrants, reunites families, protects our workers, grows our economy, restores the rule of the law and leads to citizenship," he said.

Rios advocated a path to permanent resident status, more visas in every category and a legal and safe alternative to undocumented immigration to minimize abuses.

"Another element is to recognize immigrants' full humanity. ... Immigrants are more than just workers, they are neighbors, members of families, students, members of our humanity and are an essential part of the fabric of the United States and for the future of the United States," he said.

Jolaine-Mari Monico, a panelist representing U.S. Customs and Immigration Services, shared efforts the government is taking to improve its applications process, but real change is left to lawmakers.

The government has started to adapt to the changing realities, particularly as they relate to technology, she said. In 2003, with the creation of Homeland Security, the Immigration and Naturalization Service broke up into three separate agencies, allowing processes to become more streamlined. Automated systems and access to Web-based databases helped reduce previous 24 to 36-month waits for applications to 6 to 10 months and a backlog of as many as six million cases to one million.

"The system is not perfect, but we've brought about many improvements," Monico said. "... Progress is great but sometimes we lose the human touch."

The naturalization process is also being redone, but the number of visas available is determined by a treaty with each country.

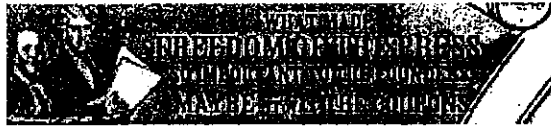
Chesser pointed to the visa problem by stating that of 140,000 employment visas granted each year, 5,000 are intended for jobs that require less than two years of experience or training. And those are currently being given to 2001 applicants.

So any solution will be made by elected officials, who will base their decisions on the number of faxes, phone calls or office visits, Chesser said.

"You need to participate in the political process, that's the only way this is going to change," she said. "... Make yourself heard. They'll do something about it if they know it's important to you."

Contact Ryan Brinks at 641-753-6611 or [rbrinks@timesrepublican.com](mailto:rbrinks@timesrepublican.com)

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